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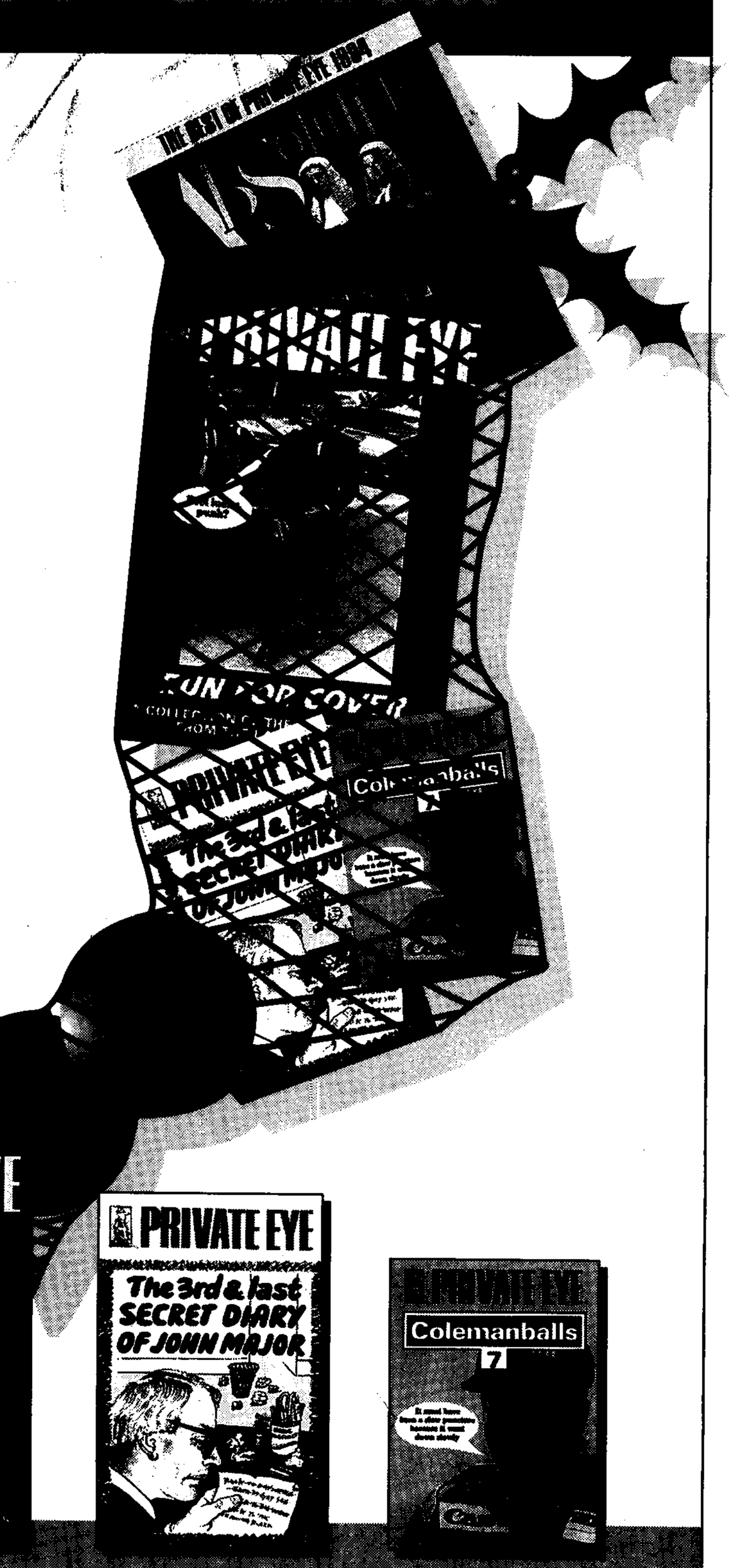
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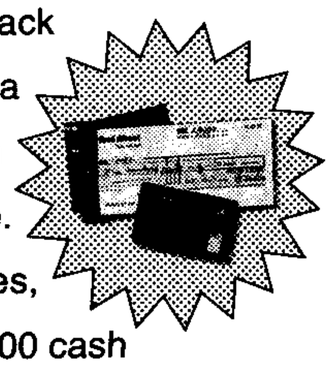

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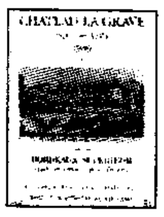

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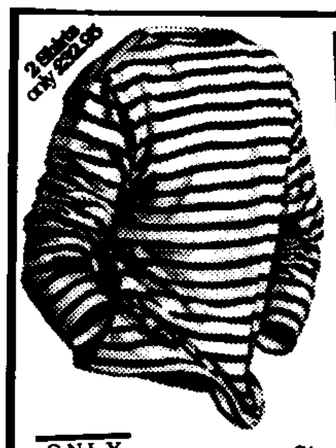

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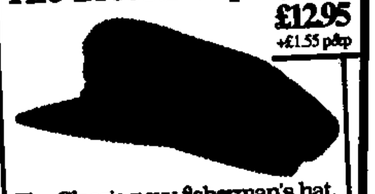

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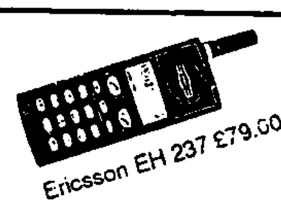

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IN THE TEAROOM

THE process of getting Tory MPs into line, usually the job of the whips, has been undertaken recently by a far more effective gang of operators: the friends of Jonathan Aitken, led by his urbane new parliamentary private secretary, Peter Ainsworth.

There was a time when Tory MPs never needed to spell out subtle social distinctions to one another in the Smoking Room; such things were simply understood. But old Tory virtues can no longer be relied upon in a crisis and lessons in etiquette were required.

LESSON ONE: THERE ARE TWO SORTS OF ARAB

"Your souk-Arab like Mohammed Fayed, pocket full of currants and a dodgy DTI report... not a bit like Jonathan's Arabs... friends of the royal family... contracts at stake in the Gulf... for Heaven's sake, Terry Venables and Nicholas Soames are both Englishmen, but they're hardly the same are they?"

LESSON TWO: THE NATURE OF OBLIGATION

"Of course, if you accept a freebie from some businessman you've never met, he'll want his political quid pro quo. But we're talking about a chum here... Godfather to his children... the only obligation Jonathan would have been under even if Ayas had paid the whole bill would have been to get in the next round."

LESSON THREE: THE RICH ARE DIFFERENT

"Four hundred quid! Jonathan's quite capable of blowing that on lunch... The cheque he sent to Abdul Rahman was drawn on his *own bank* for Chrissake."

LESSON FOUR: THE SPIRIT OF THE RULES "...but there's a *reason* for having a register of members' interests... many good reasons... but keeping records of off-the-shelf companies that have never traded and you can't even remember the names of, isn't one of them..."

Mission accomplished: the little band moves downstairs to tease members of the lobby about Peter Preston's "cod-fax" and to remind everyone of an old Arab proverb: "The dogs may yap, but the caravan moves on."

'Urquhart'

WHAT BUTLER SAW

THE unusual role of cabinet secretary Sir Robin Butler as Chief Protector of Mr Major's Ministers did not emerge too well from the hearings of the Scott inquiry into Iraqgate.

Scott heard in some detail about the civil service panic which followed the disclosures in the *Sunday Times* in December 1990 that Alan Clark, the defence procurement minister, had given a "nod and a wink" to machine tool manufacturers that they should disguise their exports to the Iraqi arms industry as "general engineering" and thus break the government's own guidelines on selling arms to Saddam Hussein (*see shameless plug, left*).

Throughout the Sunday of the *ST*'s revelations Butler rang round civil service mandarins calling them to an emergency meeting in his office at 8.30 the next morning. His room was packed with the most important people in the land, none of them elected. The mandarins studied the official record of the meeting, which showed that the *Sunday Times* revelations were entirely accurate and that Clark had indeed given a "nod and wink" to the manufacturers to break the government's own rules.

What to do? Should Clark resign? Unanimously the meeting decided that he should be protected and that the government should sit tight and (in the words of one of the mandarins) "brazen it out".

The news was passed on to the wretched Mr Major who had only become prime minister the previous week. He was very relieved to be able to tell the recalcitrant Clark (whom he had met in Downing Street at 10 o'clock that morning) that there was no need to resign. That afternoon a junior trade minister, Tim Sainsbury, was despatched to the Commons to announce that Clark totally denied the absolutely true allegations against him, which he later admitted in court.

Clark had to go in the end of course — but decently, after a two-year interval, pretending that he was sick of politics. But the principle that ministers must at all costs be protected by the civil service from the prying press was firmly established, and was followed with rather more disastrous consequences in the Neil Hamilton and Jonathan Aitken affairs.

IN 1991 an application was made to the home office for British citizenship for Mohammed, elder son of the famous arms dealer and international businessman, Adnan Kashoggi.

The home office will not say if any decision has yet been made, even though the application was vigorously supported by a prominent backbencher who later became minister for defence procurement and chief secretary to the treasury, one Jonathan Aitken.

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SLEAZE AND WHINE PARTY

Street of Shame

FINANCIAL TIMES

***FINANCIAL Times* journalists are puzzling over the slander writ issued against the paper by home secretary Michael Howard.**

On the night the Howard rumours broke, the first edition of the *FT* referred obliquely to "a third man" in the investigation being carried out by cabinet secretary Sir Robin Butler into sleaze allegations made by Harrods boss Mohamed Fayed.

The paper did not name Mr Howard because it had not been able to contact him. But when the paper's political correspondent phoned the Downing Street press office and asked if Howard was the third man, Howard's lawyers promptly marched down to chambers where they bearded his honour judge Thayne Forbes.

The judge promptly issued an injunction whose terms, the hacks were surprised to see, banned the *FT* from suggesting in any way that Mr Howard had accepted payment for questions — an allegation made by absolutely no one.

The next day Howard publicly admitted he had been investigated by Butler — which was the only allegation ever made by the *FT*. Now the paper has a writ from Howard for slander — on the basis of a question put by a correspondent to a government press officer. Howard, who is almost universally believed innocent on this one (see In the City, page 28), should perhaps have more faith in open government, of which he is said to be a supporter.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

A FEW months ago former *Mirror* editor Roy Greenslade was leading the campaign to have Betty Maxwell's autobiography banned. Now he says that it should be published after all.

After long and mature reflection, he explains, he has decided that *A Mind of My Own* will not prejudice a jury in favour of Ian and Kevin, as he had previously thought.

By an odd coincidence, the hack who has been hired by the *Sunday Times* to adapt Betty's book for serialisation — at a handsome fee — is none other than Roy Greenslade. It would, however, be quite absurd to suggest that the prospect of a large cheque from Wapping played any part in this high-minded hack's sudden *volte face*.

The Sun

***SUN* hacks love a good yarn, and one of their favourites at the moment concerns Peter Willis, the rag's hopeless showbiz correspondent.**

After a tough management "think-tank" session at a Berkshire hotel, Wapping top brass decided to relax at a nightclub and Willis was told to find a venue.

The desperate hack knows nothing about nightclubs in Berkshire, but rather than admit his ignorance attempted to bluff his way through by claiming to know just the place. He then selected Henry's at random from the Yellow Pages.

Unfortunately for Willis, when *Sun* bosses finally tracked down Henry's on a Slough housing estate, it turned out to be full of skinheads pogoing to thrash metal. As the *Sun* hacks cautiously approached the bar, a cry went up from the *Sun*-reading skins of "Get the suits", and Wapping's finest retreated in disarray.

The dishevelled hacks returned to their hotel to drown their sorrows, and in the small hours, so the story goes, art director Phil Leach and promotions director Ellis Watson attempted to swim across the Thames. The tired and emotional Leach could only make it to a dredger in mid-stream and his colleagues could only watch helplessly as Leach drifted away out of sight.

Today

***TODAY* editor Richard Stott has dismayed fellow hacks by bringing his old colleague from *Daily Mirror* days, Maxwell hagiographer Joe Haines, back from the dead.**

Haines has been hired to replace Alistair Campbell, who is going off to be Tony Blair's new press officer, so from now on *Today* readers will have the enormous pleasure of reading "Joe Haines on Thursday". Ironically his first contribution — a leader-page article about sleaze — appeared opposite an article on the Prince of Wales headed "Prince of Humbugs".

Puzzled former colleagues at the *Mirror* recall Haines's verbal and written diatribes against Rupert Murdoch, his new employer, and his oft-repeated vows that he would never under any circumstances take the Murdoch shilling.

The week before his pearls began to grace *Today*, he attended an unholy reunion with two other sycophants of Robert Maxwell for a meal in the House of Commons dining room: Lord Donoughue, the former chairman of Maxwell's pension fund management company; and Helen Liddell, now Labour MP for Monklands East, who had formerly been Maxwell's head of corporate affairs in Scotland.

Seated at the next table was "Gorgeous" George Galloway, the Labour MP for Glasgow Hillhead who in 1992 won £100,000 libel damages from the *Daily Mirror* over an article written by Haines at Maxwell's behest describing Galloway as "lower than a louse" for using parliamentary privilege to raise allegations about the great Cap'n Rob's activities.

When the three Maxwell toadies spotted Galloway they drew together and conducted the rest of their conversation in whispers.

PS: HAS Mr Murdoch ever read any of Haines's old columns in the *Daily Mirror*, in which he regularly denounced Wapping as a lie factory?

In July 1991, for instance, Haines waxed indignant at the "towering hypocrisy" of the *Sun* after it revealed that Neil Kinnock had once met a "sleazy" businessman.

"You can be certain that Lady Thatcher, John Major, Paddy Ashdown and every other leading politician has at some time greeted a crook," he raged. "And if Rupert Murdoch's never met a crook... Before the *Sun* travels too far down this muddy road it should remember that there's a lot of real, not fake, dirt around."

When Cap'n Rob's crookery was exposed three years ago, Haines announced in the *Mirror*: "I think I'll go home and have a good bath." One trusts he will be washing even more thoroughly now he is in the pay of the dirt-merchants.

THE TIMES

"HAVE You Ever Wished You Were Better Informed?" an old advertising slogan for *The Times* used to ask. *Times* readers may well wish they were better informed about the "McLibel" case between the hamburger outfit McDonald's and two supporters of London Greenpeace.

Although the case has been running at the high court for many weeks, there has been scarcely any coverage in the ex-Thunderer. Oddly enough, *The Times* did recently publish a fawning eight-page colour pull-out section celebrating the achievements of McDonald's, complete with hectares of lucrative advertising from the burger chain.

Naturally it would be absurd to suggest that these facts are in any way connected.

The Mail

***DAILY MAIL* "diarist" Nigel Dempster, already professionally on the slippery slalom, has been unlucky in his friendships.**

Not only has Dumpster lost the devotion of the millionaire gossip columnist Taki, whose amour has turned to public rancour, but the *Daily Stail*'s great moralist is no longer so close to statuesque Sky TV producer, Sue Dainty.

The friendship between Pratt-Dumptster and the engaging Australian divorcee and mother has come, alas, to a premature end.

"I got mine from Mark Thatcher"

OBSERVER

AFTER pleading poverty for many months, *Observer* editor Jonathan Fenby has suddenly decided to go on a spending spree in a desperate attempt to poach hacks from his former paper, the *Independent*.

His first target was the *Indie*'s political pundit Andrew Marr (known as "Red Andy" in his Cambridge days), who was offered £120,000 if he would move his column to the *Observer*.

Having been rebuffed by Marr, Fenby set his sights on the *Indie*'s Belfast correspondent, David McKittrick. It was an odd choice: Northern Ireland is the one subject on which the *Obs* has produced a string of scoops under Fenby's editorship, thanks to the paper's two well-regarded hacks in Belfast and Dublin, Eamonn Mallie and Mary Holland. Quite why he would wish to bring in McKittrick over their heads — at a suitably enormous salary — remains a mystery.

Alas Fenby's poaching expeditions have been not only unsuccessful but also counter-productive. Another of his highly-paid recent recruits Chris Blackhurst (who is on a salary not unadjacent to £70,000), is so fed up with the rudderless regime at the *Observer* that he has decided to jump ship. He is transferring his allegiance to... the *Indie*.

Evening Standard

IS ALL well with Marcus Scriven, the militaristic snob i/c the *Evening Standard*'s pisspoor Londoners' Diary?

Oxford partygoers returning to Christ Church college in the wee hours recently found a dinner-jacketed figure slumped in the doorway of the canon's lodgings.

Attempts to rouse the pitiful creature met with muttered whimperings that it wished to remain where it was. Finally the hack turned his face upwards to utter a string of foul oaths — and to reveal the crumpled features of the former Christ Church inmate turned gossip.

NOVEMBER's issue of *Harper's & Queen* carries a long interview with Christopher Moran, a former Lloyd's broker, who tells the magazine that although he has his critics he pays little attention to them. "I'm the last person who wants to reach for a libel lawyer."

Er, not quite. Two weeks ago the *Independent on Sunday* revealed that the Conservative party had accepted a donation from Moran, whom it described as "a man with a history of corporate malpractice". He promptly issued a libel writ.

It should be a most interesting case. For although Moran now presents himself as a thoroughly respectable figure — hobnobbing with cabinet ministers, hosting charity dinners — his career is by no means unblemished. In 1982 he was expelled from Lloyd's for "discreditable conduct"; in 1986 he was censured by the Stock Exchange for his role in the transfer of shares in the PR firm Good Relations; and in 1992 he was fined $2 million by a New York court after the securities and exchange commission found him guilty of insider dealing — a fine he has refused to pay, but which the American authorities intend to enforce should he ever set foot in their country.

Undaunted, Moran is working hard to burnish his image as an "opera-loving landowner" who "mixes with the great and the good", in the words of *Harper's & Queen* — even though he is currently being investigated by the Inland Revenue special office.

HALLO!

The heartwarming column

HALLO! *PROFILES of Mr Neil Hamilton, the late lamented corporate affairs minister, have rightly reminded us that he is a "celebrated wit" — as has been amply confirmed by his brilliant biscuit gag and his amusing remarks about the prime minister and Clare Latimer.*

According to fellow undergraduates who attended UCW Aberystwyth with Neil in the early 1970s, his sense of fun was apparent even then. One of his favourite party turns was to dress up as a Mussolini lookalike — complete with beige uniform, little round cap, black top boots and Sam Browne belt — and strut around with a goose-stepping bodyguard, announcing that they represented "the fascist party".

Hilarious! And as one contemporary recalls — admiringly, I feel sure — "he was regarded as a complete joke".

● *I do hope my friend Sir Jimmy Goldsmith is going to fund Neil in his libel action against the Guardian. He did last time against the BBC with such wonderful success and it would be a pity if such real Conservatives did not stick together.*

HALLO! TO THE lefty *Tribune*'s fund-raising dinner where Tony Blair is guest speaker and there's hardly a socialist in sight!

Lowe Bell, the PR firm of Lady Thatcher's pet, Sir Tim, takes a table for 12; Westminster Strategy, one of those clever lobby firms, is there, as well as some sweet boys from lovely Ian Greer Associates. When such men gather under the red flag, things look bad indeed for the Tories.

GALLERY OF CONTEMPORARY ART

HALLO! TO CARDIFF for another engagement with Prince Charles — this time dinner at the National Museum to round off his tour of Wales marking the 25th anniversary of his investiture.

Our hearts went out to the prince, who was on his first public engagement since baring his tortured soul to the nation, and it was heartwarming to see a good crowd waiting to welcome him.

The doors of his car were opened by two cadets, Debbie Townsend and Emma Martin, with whom he joked about the rigours of army training; but, alas, it turns out that the crowd consists largely of revolting students protesting against the £20,000 cost of the dinner. In fact the welcoming party was made up of just Emma's mum, her sisters and, er, that's it.

HALLO! WE ARE thrilled to announce the forthcoming nuptials of Arthur Scargill's delightful daughter Margaret and Justin Maitland, professional rugby league playing son of John Maitland, the pugnacious president of the Australian Miners' Union.

There is only one prob, as they say Down Under: and that is that the Scargills do no altogether approve, er, socially of their prospective in-laws. As the Aussie miners boss has been telling the Sydney press: "Scargill and his wife aren't happy about it. It's surprising given their background, but they seem to regard colonials with some disdain."

Mrs Maitland is even more forthcoming. "When things got serious the Scargills let it be known they disapproved," sniffs Carole. "It was worse than *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* **— not just a black man, but a colonial, for God's sake! And a footballer!"**

Who said the class war was a thing of the past?

LUVVIES

The word 'luvvie' cuts through what the theatre is really about. It really is a loving place where people really do try to nurture one another, try to take on board each other's creative, social and sexual needs.

PETE TOWNSHEND
Guardian

Submitted by Francis Harvey.

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

HALLO! FOLLOWING recent stories about dear Jeffrey Archer's skill at wealth-creation, I am delighted to hear further confirmation of his financial ingenuity.

Back in the 1980s, shortly before he became deputy chairman of the Conservative party, Jeffrey invited the City editor of the *Evening Standard*, **Anthony Hilton, to lunch at a London restaurant.**

"Tell me, Mr Hilton," the great novelist said, "are you a rich man?" Hilton confessed that he was not.

"But," Archer continued, "in your job you must come across a lot of price-sensitive information?" Hilton confirmed that he did indeed often hear rumours of impending takeovers and suchlike.

Jeffrey then made a simple proposal. If he provided the money and Hilton provided the tip-offs, they could make a killing on the stock exchange and split the proceeds. What could be more agreeable?

Alas, the unenterprising Hilton did not take up Jeffrey's brilliant idea.

HALLO! WHAT will talented ex-ministers Neil Hamilton and Tim Smith do now they are back on the backbenches?

Well, they could always follow the example of the disgraced former Tory MP John Browne, the first MP to be suspended from the Commons for failing to register his business interests (including £52,000 from a Saudi Arabian bank), and start preaching to Harvard business students.

As Mr Browne explains his 1990 disgrace to the business school's 25th reunion book: "When a scapegoat was needed to cover up a political scandal, I was sacrificed in a disgusting 'show trial'."

Browne, who was Tory MP for Winchester until he was deselected by his local party, was divorced by wealthy first wife Elizabeth because of his adultery. A true blue marketeer, he gallantly forced her to pay him £270,000 — and shortly afterwards she went bust.

His gallant nature was also displayed when he returned from a business trip having contracted an unfortunate infection and told Elizabeth he had made an appointment for her at the London Clinic. It wasn't till later that she discovered the nature of the "infection" — but by then Browne had sent her all the medical bills!

HALLO! POOR Mark Thatcher. Not only is he down to his last £5 million, but he still faces impertinent questions about the source of his poverty.

Perhaps those two fun-loving entrepreneurs James Hanson and Gordon White, who via their Hanson Trust made a substantial investment in Mark's unlucky Dallas company, could come forward on his behalf.

Both are honourable men — and coincidentally honoured men, too: by Mrs Thatcher, as it happens. Hanson was ennobled by Mark's mum in 1983 and White was knighted by her as soon as she came to office in 1979, and ennobled by her when she left in 1990. Come on chaps: Time to speak up for Mumsie's boy!

"Come on, Mona darling, give me happy... That's it... Maybe laugh a little... Perfect, make love with the canvas... Yes, keep it going..."

HALLO! *MOHAMED FAYED's largesse knows no bounds, it seems. His Harrods store is currently advertising in The Stage for "Santa's Helpers". "We have a number of positions for fun-loving individuals to join in the festivities in our Christmas Grotto," it says — just the thing for unemployed former ministers, perhaps, who are down on their luck!*

The Marquesa

MAN IN THE EYE

HERE are some random facts concerning Neil Hamilton, the trade minister in charge of business probity who decided to sack himself last month because he hadn't done anything wrong.

● Hamilton has a letter in the *Eye* of 10 February 1984 in which he describes Ian Greer Associates as "an excellent firm offering an excellent service to the client companies lucky enough to retain it."

He denies that he has received "a penny piece" from Greer, though he does say that since he was elected in 1983 "I have worked with Ian Greer Associates on behalf of Associated Octel, which has a plant in my constituency where 250 jobs will be lost because of the government decision to phase out lead in petrol."

● The *Eye* reports how Hamilton's name appears more than once in tapes of the "sting" programme on Ian Greer Associates prepared by Central Television's *Cook Report*. The tapes show Greer's men promising the programme's two dupe businessmen access to Hamilton, corporate affairs minister at the department of trade. The "businessmen" pretend they need to buy a government agency and target the Insolvency Agency at the DTI (prop: N. Hamilton).

● In the 1992 election, the *Eye* notices that Hamilton, a member of the government and a speaker in much demand, travelled all the way to South Wales specially to speak for the Tory candidate in Cynon Valley. That candidate's chances were not good, as proved by the election result — Labour 26,254, Tory 4,890. Quite why such a high-profile minister should go to the aid of such a no-hoper has never been clear, but it obviously had nothing to do with the fact that the Tory candidate, Mr Andrew Smith, is group managing director of Ian Greer Associates.

● In a debate in a Commons committee on his own deregulation bill, Hamilton quipped: "I went to Rio for the day once, not so much for environmentally-friendly reasons but more to help British industry to export weapons of mass destruction. I regret that I was unsuccessful in securing the necessary contract."

The *Eye* offers a year's free subscription to anyone who can find, since 1983, a public declaration by Mr Hamilton of either a trip to Rio or an interest in a company exporting weapons of mass destruction.

WHEN a transport select committee concluded that unleaded petrol posed a serious health hazard because it contained benzine, it was a serious poke in the eye for the Tories who hurriedly introduced environmental policies in the late 80s to establish their green credentials.

Of course they were only doing their best and they were never told about the harmful effects of benzine, a carcinogenic aromatic which replaces the lead in unleaded fuel. Oh yes they were.

A Mr Carl Bromfield from Stoke-on-Trent *did* tell the government about the dangers back in 1989. He had noticed that benzine had been banned in the United States and other European countries because of its carcinogenic content. Armed with this knowledge he wrote to his MEP, who in turn wrote to the then under secretary of state for the environment Virginia Bottomley, and to transport secretary Robert Atkins.

Their response was as measured as one might expect: they said benzine was perfectly safe. They also said Mr Bromfield's suggested substitute, the uncarcinogenic MTBE, was untested — even though it has replaced benzine throughout the US and Europe.

TWO MONTHS ago Tory MP Rupert Allason demanded — and got — an apology from the *Observer* after it claimed he was making Nimby-style objections to a small housing development in Aldworth, the Berkshire village where he has a weekend cottage (see *Eye* 856).

The *Observer* cravenly reassured its readers that the MP had not made "a planning objection to the development". Well, he has now: his objection was lodged with the planning authorities last month.

Will the *Observer* now apologise for its apology?

ENVIRONMENT secretary John Gummer showed little concern when civil service union representatives complained that asbestos records had gone missing since the privatisation of the Property Services Agency.

But he pulled his finger out when crumbling and dangerous asbestos cladding was found in his own back yard — well, in service ducts in the giant Marsham Street complex which houses his own department and the department of transport.

Even though the building will be demolished in 1997, Gummer is spending £1 million of taxpayers' money to have the stuff removed. Though the 12-week contract starts this month, it does not extend to the DoT, whose staff will stay put until they are transferred to decontaminated areas.

THE HANG 'em and flog 'em brigade will be out in force in Harrogate next week when a former NHS employee appears before local magistrates.

John Henderson is accused of stealing more than £7,000 between 1991 and 1993 after obtaining a job by deception at Wharfedale hospital in Otley.

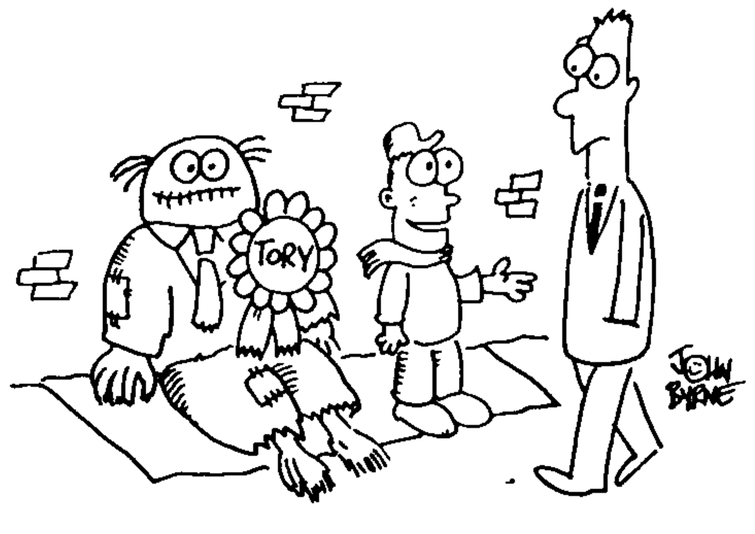
But Mr Henderson should have little problem finding character witnesses. After all, he was press officer for Leeds North West Tory MP Keith Hampson during the 1992 general election, and stood as a Tory candidate himself in the 1991 local elections.

THE Royal Society, the most important scientific academy in the UK, has delivered a stinging rebuff to Tim Eggar, the energy minister, and to Michael Heseltine's department of trade.

It has decided to present one of its most prestigious prizes, the Esso Energy Award for 1994, to Professor Trevor Whittaker, a pioneer of world renown in the renewable energy field, who has been treated outrageously by Britain's DTI.

Whittaker is our most successful experimenter in wave energy. His pioneering plant on Islay in the Inner Hebrides generates free electricity using the waves as "fuel".

Whittaker was even awarded 550,000 ecus (£425,000) by Brussels to build a new and bigger wave power station on Islay... but then the DTI stepped in. EC rules state that the money can only be handed over if the host country (ie Britain) also supports the project. But Eggar, Heseltine's deputy who looks after energy, said Britain would be providing no further money for wave energy. This meant Brussels had to withdraw its offer and Whittaker was unable to go ahead with the new experimental station.



"£2,000 for the Guy?"

WHILE the government congratulates itself on another reduction in road casualties, what it is really celebrating is another reduction in the freedom of movement for non-motorists.

Casualty rates have dropped *not* because drivers have become more careful — they obviously haven't — but because there are now fewer pedestrians and cyclists around for them to kill and injure.

For example, in 1971 90 percent of junior schoolchildren made their own way to school. Twenty years later that figure was down to 9 percent, many parents now preferring to drive their children instead because of the dangers on the roads.

Britain has one of Europe's highest rates of child road casualties, but back-slapping ministers ignore this, emphasising instead that the *overall* casualty rate is lower than in most other European countries.

THE removal of Robin Cook as opposition trade and industry spokesman at a time when the government is reeling in this area, has aroused strong feelings in the parliamentary Labour party.

It is well known that he has been shunted into the relatively innocuous post of foreign affairs spokesman because Gordon Brown, the shadow chancellor, did not like having a colleague on his patch who was obviously brighter and more radical. Tony Blair was not prepared to resist Brown, who himself had stood aside in the party's leadership contest to avoid splitting the right-wing vote, but for Labour in the Commons the move is a self-inflicted wound.

Cook came top in elections for both the shadow cabinet and the party's national executive, an unprecedented double whammy.

Cook has been replaced in the trade slot by the peculiarly ineffective MP John Cunningham, member for the plutonium-rich constituency of Copeland, which includes Sellafield. He is fanatically pro-nuclear and will ensure that Labour's energy policy, expected in the next few weeks, alienates everyone concerned with the environment.

● WHEN Brendan Barber, deputy general-secretary of the TUC, took ill on holiday with severe back strain, his family put him on the living room floor until the doctor arrived. Imagine his hurt when the doctor's first diagnostic question was: "Do you have private health insurance?"

'Backbiter'

JOHN KENT PRESENTS
JOHN MAJOR'S SENSATIONAL BIG TOP CIRCUS & MENAGERIE
THE DIVERSION
WE NEED SOMETHING TO TAKE THE SPOTLIGHT OFF ALL THIS SLEAZE!
WILL THE SCOTT ENQUIRY DO?

NOOKS and CORNERS

IN DUBLIN in the 1970s one particular name was guaranteed to strike terror and dismay in those who knew and loved this once-fair city: that of Sam Stephenson, an architect with an impressive knack of making a fast punt when part of the Georgian fabric of the Irish capital happened to come down.

Mr Stephenson was responsible for the despoiling of Fitzwilliam Street and for the great lump of the Bank of Ireland which fouls the intricate area between Dame Street and the Liffey.

But Mr Stephenson's reputation became too much of a liability even in the Ireland of Mr Haughey. So about five years ago the Dublin Defiler reemerged in London. No longer a brave, forward-looking modern architect, he was now a reconstructed, born-again deeply sensitive conservationist who was anxious to use his skills working with old buildings.

He bought into the clapped out London firm of architects Stone Toms, and with his oily Irish charm even attempted to ingratiate himself into Spitalfields, that precious area of 18th century houses of a sort which, when in Dublin, Stephenson longed to replace. Now, I'm sorry to have to report, he is set to defile the once-fair English city of Cambridge.

His victim is unfortunate. Cambridge, of course, is no longer a picturesque and civilised ancient university. Since the 1960s it has become a museum, or rather an architectural zoo, consisting of masterpieces of arid and contrived avant-garde buildings designed by smug, self-satisfied modern architects and paid for by greedy and arrogant dons. In the process the city of Cambridge has largely disappeared and the colleges have been spoiled.

There are, however, a few exceptions to the run of posturing new buildings. One is the additions recently made to St Edmund's College, a dim little institution to the north of the city centre which wished to pull itself up. To this end, the college employed Roderick Gradidge, the kilted and pig-tailed upholder of Arts and Crafts ideals who added new work in a style sympathetic to the earlier 1930s Tudor buildings of the college. The result, paid for by the Japs and opened only last year, is generally accounted rather a success.

St Edmund's, Cambridge. The Gradidge tower

But now St Edmund's is going the way of older and less wise colleges and is getting ready to expand further. To this end consultants have been appointed to identify a "benefactor" who will fork out for huge new additions to the college. And with these consultants comes their own favoured architect who is, guess who, the Oily Defiler. His victim this time is poor Gradidge's six-storey tower, the landmark and focus which St Edmund's needed and of which the fellows are very fond. It may not be great architecture, but it belongs, looks right, and is popular.

Sam Stephenson soon revealed that he can no more be trusted in an Oxbridge college than in a Georgian city. He has mugged up on post-modernism, and proposes a new wing with a gratuitously vulgar double colonnade. Naturally, although he was told that the fellows did not want the tower touched, he first proposed "redetailing" it to emphasise its verticality and then produced a perspective with a gigantic post-modern-Palladian portico slapped on to it. In justification, this sensitive and scholarly designer announced that his scheme was appropriately traditional as the typical Cambridge college was derived from the Palladian villa form — an excitingly novel notion which would surprise many historians. However, although this sort of drivel might satisfy secondhand car dealers in Dublin, it was too much even for the fellows of St Edmunds, who asked Sam to think again.

But Mr Stephenson knows how to butter his bread. The consultants soon made it clear that such a stance by the fellows was incompatible with finding a benefactor. Another perspective was produced in which the portico on the tower was a mere two-storeys high, and this was reluctantly approved by the fellows. So much for academic freedom, so much for collegiate independence, so much for architecture when money is at stake.

IN EYE 838 I told the sad tale of St Erkenwald's Southend, a handsome listed church by Walter Tapper which, so sadly, went on fire while its owners were repairing the roof.

Southend borough council has already decided that the building can now be demolished, but this was postponed while the department of national heritage decided if it wanted to intervene. It does not, and English Heritage has also thrown in the sponge.

But all is not yet lost. A scheme by the Southend & District Preservation Trust to make St Erkenwald's a Greek Orthodox church combined with a ballroom dancing centre (Orthodox liturgical dance? Why not?) has still not been considered by the council. It ought to be: it is not as if Southend is over endowed with fine buildings, after all. Indeed, the casual visitor might suppose the place had been rebuilt by Mr Sam Stephenson.

'Piloti'

Pseuds Corner

Then I remember him [Damien Hirst] saying something. He said that he had asked his granny, when she died, did she want to be in his art? You know, preserved in formaldehyde. That was when I knew. This was Damien Hirst.

DAVE STEWART
'How We Met', Independent on Sunday

I also saw Lady Di at one do. She was great. I just went, "Jesus Christ, that's Lady Di." At a dinner. She was just so amazingly Di. Unbelievable.

DAMIEN HIRST
'How We Met', Independent on Sunday

The night we met I got home about 11.30pm. I felt so inspired by him, by his ideas, by his raw nerve, I wrote a song called 'Damien Save Me' — from mediocrity and people who don't share their emotions. The next morning I went up to the studio and put it all down on tape: "Damien save me and be my guide, sooner or later we're all gonna die, when we were walking through the streets, everything you said was bitter sweet... Cut me in half and I'll let you see, what this whole wide world has done to me." When I played it to him he just said, "Wow", and kissed me.

DAVE STEWART
'How We Met', Independent on Sunday

I don't like using humans in formaldehyde. Doesn't work. We're used to seeing dead meat but not dead humans, and once they're in formaldehyde you simply think it's a model — like death doesn't really exist. I've dealt with bodies, I know. I did an anatomy course in Leeds.

DAMIEN HIRST
'How We Met', Independent on Sunday

We've both got the same sick sense of humour. I've got this little camera, and when I get the film back it's nearly always got three new pictures. Which means Damien's borrowed it for a ha-ha. Last time it had pictures of his penis. He came round yesterday and showed me this video. Close-ups of his anus. It was the maddest thing you've ever seen. Hilarious.

DAVE STEWART
'How We Met', Independent on Sunday

The greatest idea in the 20th century is the collage, and Dave is a living collage. He orchestrates different things. Business, photography, records. And he stays calm. When his kids are climbing all over him he says, really quiet, "Don't do that." And they don't. Brilliant.

DAMIEN HIRST
'How We Met', Independent on Sunday

Damien's totally alive. In tune. He takes pictures of a ping-pong ball in mid-bounce and calls it "I want to be with everyone always forever now." That's Damien. Hitting the nail on the head.

DAVE STEWART
'How We Met', Independent on Sunday

CONTRIBUTORS: Everyone.

£10 paid for entries

TV

Look Who's Talking... with Mariella Frostrup

(Carlton)

Good Morning With Anne And Nick

(BBC1)

WHEN Mariella Frostrup began to make an improbably glittering career out of the limited assets of a strange name, a permanently uncleared throat and a nervous giggle, people used to joke that she'd soon have a chat-show.

This was, in fact, an anachronistic joke. There were no TV chat shows anymore, and their place as the inevitable destination of the lightweight celebrity of the moment had been taken by the photo-bylined newspaper column: which the *Sunset Times* duly bestowed on Mariella.

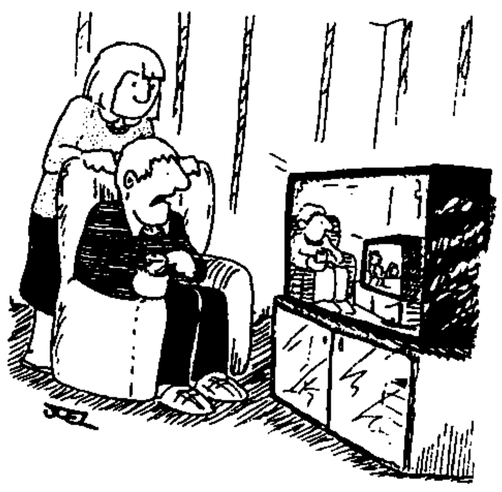
Unfortunately, though, we reckoned without Carlton. Typically unaware that giving talk shows to bimbos was the game of 10 years ago, the world's worst television station has inflicted on its London viewers the Mariella Frostrup talk show.

The only clever thing about the whole show is its title, *Look Who's Talking*, a dynamite in-joke obviously planted by a disgruntled member of the production team. *Look Who's Talking*, it will be remembered, was a Hollywood movie in which the joke was that a baby was dubbed over with a grown-up voice saying adult things.

In the gloomiest studio since *After Dark*, Mariella sits on a huge sofa. In front of her is a table on which — inexplicably — rests a vast bowl of pears. This is widely believed to be another piece of production team subversion: a subliminal reference — a nice pair — to the highlight of Mariella's journalistic career: a newspaper article she wrote about the size of her breasts.

The other item on the table is a copy of *The Big Issue*: part of a strange web of references to homelessness which haunt the programme. In the opening titles, shots of Mariella at glamorous parties are intercut with images of the homeless in the Strand. Are we being told that Mariella, as a journalist, is aware of the Other London? Or is the producer sending out another coded message: blessed are the homeless, for they don't have television sets, and don't have to watch Mariella.

All the questions are about sex: Mariella's trademark. "Do you find men make passes at you because you're a ballet dancer?" she asked a male star of the Bolshoi last week.



"I'm not sure about this real-life drama"

"Did you get anything with your feminine wiles?" she asked war correspondent, Janine Di Giovanni. "You once said you weren't averse to a bit of lesbianism," she reminded Amanda de Cadanet.

Sadly for aficionados, Mariella's show only has another week to run, although it's certainly appalling enough for Carlton to commission another series. Those suffering withdrawal symptoms should tune in on weekday mornings to BBC1, where *Good Morning With Anne And Nick* is rapidly developing into one of TV's great nightmares of inadvertent comedy.

The basic risibility comes from the mix of items. If you thought Esther Rantzen's *That's Life* was uneasy in its mix of pun and pain, you ain't seen Anne and Nick yet. Running through the programme "menu" at the top of a recent show, Anne began: "If you've been having powerful dreams about life in another time, give us a call on the following number..."?

As the mind boggled at just how many shift-workers, unemployed and young mothers — A&N's core audience — might have woken up that morning convinced they were Marie Antoinette, Anne moved on to the other items, while pictures flashed up on screen: "The tragic story of a woman who gave birth to a stillborn baby in America..." A police missing person poster appeared on screen, the series' ambitious range of tones unfortunately often being accompanied by a technical clumsiness. "Er, that's not her... and was, er, accused of murder..." Unsettled by the technical blip, Anne was now forced to switch quickly from prim to perky to say: "And big bottoms are back. Hooray!..." before going all gloomy again in an instant to continue: "And we tell you the sad story of a young boy fighting for his life..."

The boy's parents were in a studio elsewhere, but the sound link wasn't working. Filling in, Nick did another plug for the morning's phone-in, for people who were tormented under the duvet with thoughts of previous existences. They would just have to pray that there was no one viewing who had been Lord Reith in a previous life.

'Square Eyes'

PS: Mariella Frostrup has been doing some TV criticism of her own...

In her sparkling *Sunday Times* column she attacked Germaine Greer's talk-show, *The Last Word*. This, the doyenne of female TV presenters decided, was no good because it was obsessed with sex. "It quickly became clear that the point of the show was merely to discuss the opposite sex," she wrote.

So what meaningful platonic topics filled the rest of Frostrup's column? Her attempted seduction of Muppets' star Kermit at an Oxford Union debate, Casanova's contraceptive methods and the fetishist desires of London traffic wardens all featured.

MEDIA NEWS

ALAN "Dipstick" Duncan, the Tory MP for Rutland, was in fighting form on Monday's *Today* programme, vigorously defending Jonathan Aitken and denouncing the sleaze-hunters of Fleet Street.

No doubt his support for Aitken is all part of the Neighbourhood Watch service: Duncan's imposing London residence, in Gayfere Street, SW1, is just round the corner from Aitken's even grander house in Lord North Street.

Oddly, however, *Today* presenter Jim Naughtie neglected to mention one fact which might have some bearing on Dipstick's attitude to sleaze: that Duncan himself resigned as a PPS in January after it was revealed that he had cunningly used Westminster council's "right-to-buy" rules to acquire a neighbouring council house at a handsome discount.

WHEN a Newsroom Southeast crew searched Beaconsfield for voters who remembered Tony Blair canvassing there in the 1982 by-election, they were delighted to come across a respectable-looking lady who had nothing but good things to say about the Labour leader.

Little wonder: it turned out she was Lady Felicity Harwood, daughter of the Labour prime minister Clement Attlee, although the BBC crew did not know this.

As she later told the *Bucks Free Press*: "They were looking for your average Tory middle class voter. So they stopped and asked me what did I think of Tony Blair and I said 'marvellous'... Obviously from their tone and their address they didn't know I had any connection with Labour."

ANDREW NEILL, ex-*Sunset Times* editor and Fox TV presenter, has been dishing out advice to none other than the Princess of Wales.

From his vantage point across the Atlantic he wrote an *Evening Standard* article entitled "Stay away from the Big Apple, Diana". But in the midst of his noble reasoning Neill descended into a tirade against American television.

"Celebrity is a fleeting accolade in the land of the five-second soundbite," he fumed. "It is assumed that most television viewers have the attention span of a gnat and nobody can broadcast a thought if it takes longer than an MTV commercial".

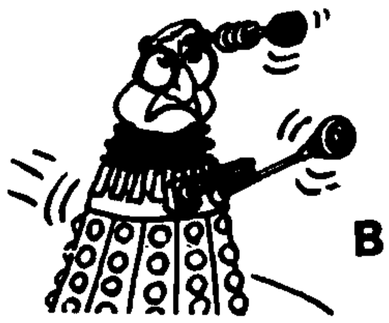
Avid media spectators may be right to assume that all is not going well with Neill's break into American television. Could these sour grapes be certain that rug-head's documentary series is not destined to get beyond a 3am slot in Anchorage?

NEVER trust a Sun columnist whose salary is higher than his IQ.

As Garry Bushell told the *Guardian*'s My Media slot recently: "On my way to work I listen to *Today* and the *Morning Experience* on Virgin with two very funny DJs."

Gazza knows all about Virgin. As he tells his *Sun* readers every week: "Don't miss me talking TV with Russ and Jono on Virgin 1215 at 8.35am every Thursday."

The Last Word
THE LAST WORD
THIS IS AN ALL-WOMAN SHOW TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR INDEPENDENCE...
FREE OF MALE INFLUENCE...
SHOWING THAT THE FEMALES OF THE SPECIES HAVE THEIR OWN OPINIONS ON ALL THE IMPORTANT ISSUES OF THE DAY...
SO WHAT SHALL WE TALK ABOUT?...
MEN!
Ken Pyne



BIRTSPEAK

A REPORT in the October edition of *Management Training Update*, the glossy journal of BBC Management Training, explains:

"The brief asked us to produce a skills reference section to the NCA [news and current affairs] Briefing System workbook, and to design a series of one day workshops where the emphasis would be on induction to the briefing system and intensive tutored skills practice *in* running briefing meetings…

"To ensure that the project met its remit and that *the participants* had a positive practical learning experience, a collaborative team approach was adopted between NCA and Management Training. On the project management team were Linda Firsht from Management Training, Sandra Horne, Ilse Howling (Internal Communication Officer) and Chrissie Pulford (Training Co-ordinator) from NCA. The delivery team was Linda Firsht, Janette Blakemore and Matt Driver from Management Training, in collaboration with Ilse and Chrissie. The project administration was handled by Sonia Rajani (Management Training) and Hilary Gould (NCA)…

"Arising out of the skills practice and feedback, participants realised that they had to take their managerial roles seriously even where this created inner conflict with their preferred roles as excellent journalists, or senior technical specialists…"

BBC2's recent *Public Eye* documentary focusing on the soaring number of private security guards in Britain included interviews with unsavoury types from Reliance Security Ltd in Thornton Heath.

The company guards motorway works from the destructive hands of anti-road protestors, and some of its security guards interviewed in the programme were less than charming. They admitted using rough techniques and calling themselves the Kick Ass Squad.

If BBC bosses had seen the programme, they might have been warned about such roughnecks. But too late: the young toughs in *Public Eye* will soon be known as Birt's Heavies — Broadcasting House has just awarded its security contract to Reliance Security Ltd.

RADIO ONE's besieged controller Matthew Bannister has finally run out of excuses for his station's ratings collapse which, as the *Eye* predicted, has seen the network overtaken by Radio Two.

Not surprisingly, then, BBC executives are convinced their colleague's fate is sealed: early next year Bannister will be, er, promoted.

Apparently John Birt is entirely satisfied with 1FM's performance and blames the rest of the media for the station becoming a national laughing stock. Bannister is expected to be given a strategic rather than a line management role, which is Birtspeak for saying that his salary will be massively increased and he'll be able to issue orders without being blamed for the consequences.

IF BBC Wales's grandly titled National Orchestra of Wales was a bit off key during its concert at the New York HQ of the United Nations — it was there to promote Wales as a tourist destination — the BBC has only itself to blame.

It refused to include a sound expert in the party because of the expense. Happily, the party that jetted across the Atlantic did include lots of top brass: Gwyn Jones, the BBC governor and disgraced ex-chair of the Welsh Development Agency; Geraint Talfan Davies, BBC Wales controller; Professor Dai Smith, head of English language programmes; and Wyn Mears, marketing chief.

Jones is no stranger to freebies of this sort; at the WDA he once indulged in an away-day by Concorde to do business in the US.

O·B·N

John Major is truly a statesman. But his rise to greatness has made no difference to the man of the people. That is the real measure of him. And why he will remain at No. 10 for many years to come.

BRIAN HITCHEN
Sunday Express

Submitted by Gordon Brownlee.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

SLEAZEWATCH

WHILE the press has been lambasting Neil Hamilton and Tim Smith for asking parliamentary questions on behalf of the Fayed brothers, nobody has been tasteless enough to mention that Mohamed Fayed had just as many cheerleaders in Fleet Street as in Westminster.

One is Brian Vine, the veteran *Daily Mail* hack who led the attack on Hamilton for staying in the Paris Ritz. Vine has been a Fayed groupie for many years. It was he who dubbed the Harrods boss "the fabulous Pharaoh" in a *Mail* article on 10 March 1985.

Another is Ivan Fallon of the *Sunday Times*, who during the 1980s wrote countless puff pieces about the brothers and indignantly denied that they had ever lied about the source of their money — even when there was overwhelming evidence that they had.

Yet another, of course, is *Sunday Express* editor Brian Hitchen, who has been fingered as the "go-between" who took Fayed's sleaze allegations to John Major. In December 1989, as editor of the *Daily Star*, Hitchen ran a front-page splash drooling over the "generosity" of the "caring tycoon" after Fayed had made a donation to the paper's "Giving for Living" campaign. In return, Fayed was hailed by the *Star* as "the man with the Midas touch".

How many hacks benefited from Mohamed Fayed's Midas touch? We do not know. But plenty did — and some are now hastily declaring their interests. Brian Vine has disclosed that he spent a weekend in a £6,000-a-night suite at the Paris Ritz, at Fayed's invitation. *Evening Standard* hackette Melanie McDonagh confessed last week that she, too, had had a free holiday at the Ritz in Paris, while *Observer* columnist Richard Ingrams has owned up to accepting "a hideous tartan briefcase containing two Harrods ties" *(I only got a Harrods teddybear — Ed)*. Sir Jonah Junor, with understandable pride, revealed this week that in May 1993 he had turned down an offer from Fayed, whom he had never met, of a free holiday at Balnagown, the tycoon's castle in Scotland.

Another knight of the Fourth Estate, Sir Peregrine Worsthorne, pointed out in the *Sunday Telegraph* last weekend that Lord Beaverbrook often gave hospitality to Labour politicians such as Michael Foot and Aneurin Bevan. "In what way," he demanded, "is staying at the Ritz hotel in Paris, courtesy of Mohamed Fayed, different?" Well might he ask: for, although he neglected to mention it, Worsthorne has himself enjoyed more than one free trip to Paris at Fayed's expense.

Anyone else?

SKEEZEWATCH

AS Fleet Street's ski journalists prepare for another heady winter of freebie press trips, who will be sharing their king-size duvets?

Harpers & Queen ski editor Adam Ruck, who is also the *Sunday Telegraph*'s man on the piste, has managed to cadge freebies for a different woman for each of the past four seasons.

First it was his girlfriend Judy Davis; then his wife Jane Slade (who edits the Ski Club of Great Britain's *Ski Survey*); then ski hackette Nicky Holford. Last winter it was feather-brained ex-PR Jane Parritt.

Ruck, who is known to his bedfellows as "the silent Fuck", also tried to wrest *Harpers* promotions director Jennifer Sharpe from the clutches of Tory MP Steven Norris, and made a play for *Marie Claire* features editor Michele Lavery.

Ruck's wife now plans a kiss'n'tell account of passion on the slopes in a suitably entitled book, *Warts and All.*

Meanwhile Ruck popped up in the October issue of *Daily Mail Ski*, waxing lyrically about the family tour operator Mark Warner. By a strange coincidence, Ruck also writes for the Mark Warner winter and summer brochures!

WORLD OF HYPE

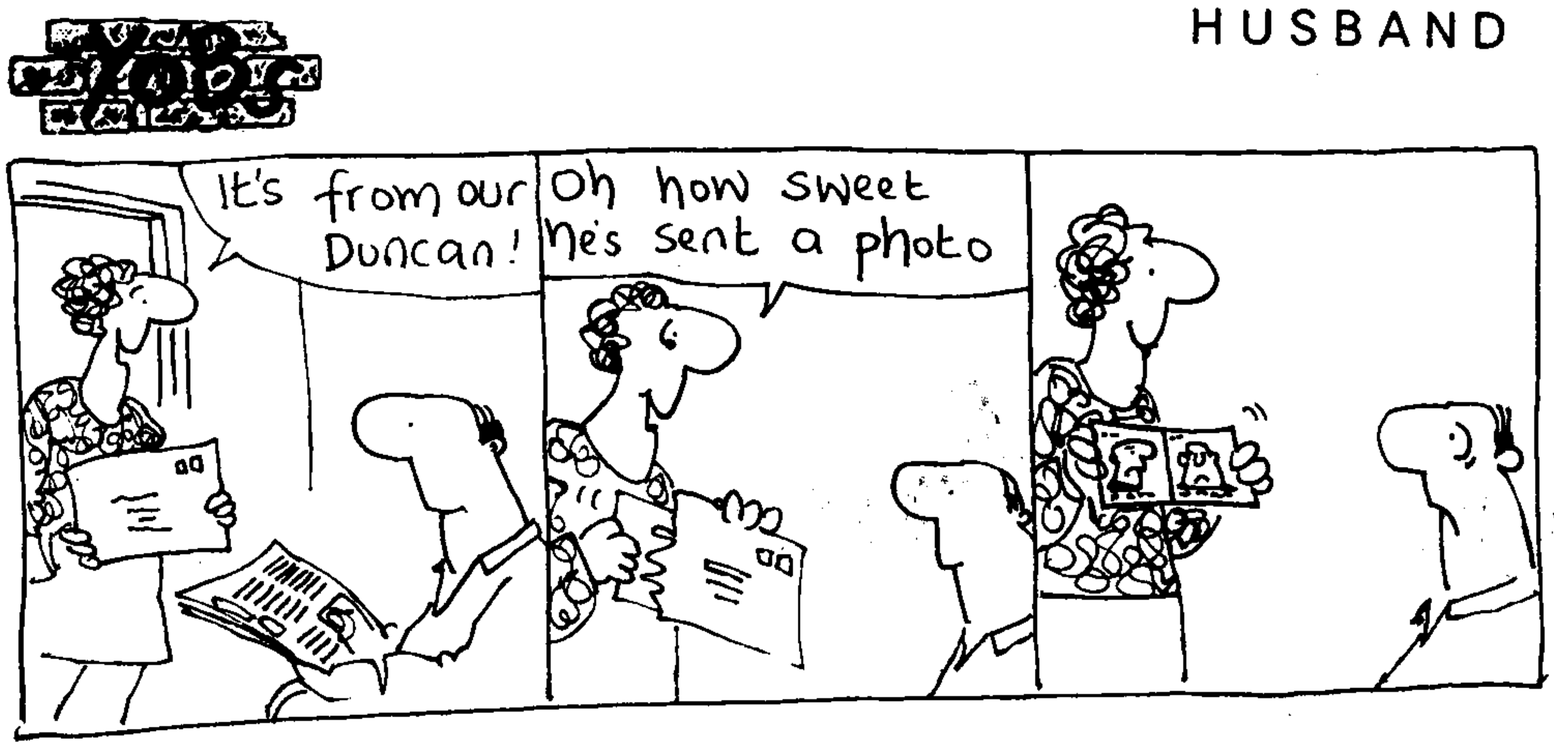
FREUD COMMUNICATIONS, PR lackey to various "celebs", has queered its pitch with two important outlets: the *Sun* and the *News of the Screws*.

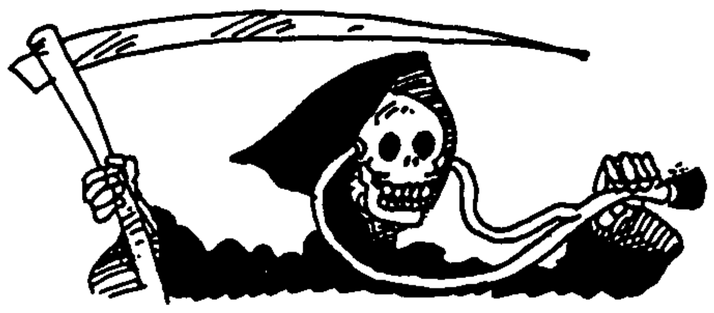
At the party after the premiere of the Disney film *The Lion King*, *Sun* editor Stewart Higgins and *Screws* editor Piers Morgan were casually chatting in the VIP area with Elton John, who co-wrote and performed the film's title song, when one of Fraud's minions asked them both to "back off from Elton".

Higgins and Morgan — or "Stew" and "Piers" as the jumped up minion insisted on calling them — were then invited to leave the party until Elton had gone. A shouting match ensued, which continued out on the pavement and culminated in the two editors telling the lickspittle that they never wanted to hear from him or Fraud Communications ever again.

Anxious to make amends, Matthew Fraud himself phoned Morgan the next day claiming he would sack the employee concerned, but the rift remains.

YOG





DOING THE ROUNDS

PLANS in Berkshire to rationalise resources at the Wexham and Heatherwood hospitals trust do not bode well for staff or patients at Bracknell's Heatherwood hospital, which is set to lose its 24-hour casualty unit, special care baby unit, paediatric ward and consultant led maternity services.

Half the maternity cases and all the children and emergencies would be expected to travel to Wexham, which can't be reached from Ascot or Bracknell by public transport. Bracknell's population is expanding and the road to Wexham is often crowded.

Four years ago similar plans were shelved after a huge public outcry and the support of East Berkshire's Tory MP Andrew MacKay. This time Mr MacKay has sided with the trust. But this can have nothing to do with his promotion to the whips' office.

● **STOCKPORT acute services NHS trust** has come up with an innovative career package for nurses. On selected wards G-, F- and E-grade staff are to be demoted a grade, and D-grade nurses are to be replaced by health care assistants with no nursing qualifications.

The latter's duties will include "resuscitation, taking ECGs, care planning and fluid administration". As RCN officer Paul Mullany put it: "It's appalling. Only coronary nurse specialists can do some of these things. They're denigrating the profession and selling nurses down the Swanee."

● **GLASGOW'S** most underused private hospital, **The Health Care International**, has been contracted by **West Midlands RHA** to perform 100 heart operations on NHS patients currently queuing for the service at **Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth hospital**. Quite why Britain's second city is unable to provide sufficient heart surgery for its residents is unclear (other than **South Birmingham HA's** crippling debts), but the future looks bleak for the QE's 30 specialist cardiac nurses.

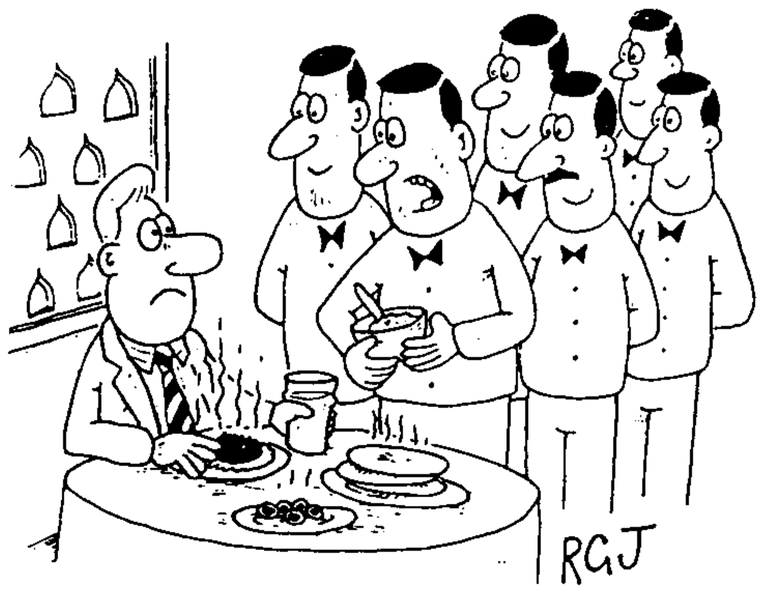
● SIR Duncan Nichol, NHS boss turned BUPA employee, was booked as the after dinner speaker at the recent overseas doctors' association annual dinner in Liverpool. Unfortunately Sir Duncan was unavoidably called away to America and cancelled at the last minute. Not wishing to let anyone down, he sent a replacement in the form of an amusing fifteen minute video of his speech.

The ODA itself continues to be well represented in the medical hierarchy. Of the 57 members of the BMA council and 40 members of the council of the Royal College of Physicians, none is from an ethnic minority. The General Medical Council boasts seven ethnic representatives in its elected section (out of 107), and none in its non-elected section; and the Royal College of Surgeons has three non-Caucasian council members out of 37.

● DISPENSING doctors are in danger of going out of business thanks to a loophole which allows any pharmacist on an FHSA list to open additional premises in a rural area and thus snuff out competition from GPs, who can only serve from a single surgery. This has not escaped the attention of dispensing doctors association chairman Dr David Roberts who, in a letter to *Chemist and Druggist*, said chemists were pouring through the loophole "like rats from a sewer". Dr Roberts then had to face the full wrath and pomposity of the BMA council, who spent two hours trying to get him to apologise.

● THE special care baby unit at **London's St Thomas' hospital** is in proud possession of a spanking new high frequency oscillating ventilator, so new in fact that only senior doctors are allowed to change the gas cylinder. When it recently ran low at 1am, Professor Milne, the paediatric consultant on call, was invited to come in from home to replace it. Sensibly wishing to avoid an unnecessary visit, the professor asked if his senior registrar might be interested in the task. Unfortunately the senior registrar was otherwise engaged at the birth of his child. Twenty minutes later he was changing the cylinder. Perhaps the shortest paternity leave on record.

"Quango chutney, sir?"



Elsewhere at St Thomas's, the medical student bar has been closed for two weeks and spirits banned until Christmas after a "round the world" spirit drinking competition was organised for freshers' week. Twenty students ended up in casualty, eight were admitted and three were unrousable. The bar at **Guy's hospital** has also been closed after freshers' celebrations led to vandalisation in the consultants' car park and at **Birmingham University medical school (BUMS)**, the freshers' disco was called off after 20 minutes when a woman was hit by a flying beer can.

● IAIN STEWART, fund manager at **Wirral's Ashton House GP practice**, has written to Pearse "Piss" Butler, chief executive of **Wirral Health**, to complain about the "over-performance" of **Wirral hospital**, which the practice can't afford to sustain. "If in-patient costs exceed 109% of the budget, this will constitute an action level and fundholding procedures carried out without prior agreement will not be invoiced." Mr Stewart concludes: "Of great concern is that public knowledge of this proposal may cause adverse publicity when fundholding locally has such a good reputation."

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM

AT THE end of last month 200 meat traders and farmers of the Quality Meat and Livestock Alliance (QMLA) heard something to their advantage from judge Raymond Jack in Bristol high court.

For 18 months many of them had been withholding the ruinous veterinary inspection fees imposed by the ministry of agriculture (Maffia). This sordid excuse for a ministry has claimed that it is required by the EC to conform with fresh meat directive 91/497 — even though many other EC countries are more relaxed about inspection charges.

After four days in court and three weeks during which he reserved judgment, Jack concluded that he could not try the issue and referred the case to the European court of justice — the very outcome the QMLA wanted.

Still, by some perverse reasoning Jack also decided that outstanding veterinary fees — the legality of which he could not decide — should be paid by Toby Baker, a Bristol abattoir owner at the centre of the court case. He was ordered to pay £45,000 to Woodspring district council, which had fronted the case for the Maffia.

Although this "judgment" is to be challenged in the appeal court where the QMLA is confident it will be overturned, the ruling was enough for Woodspring's chief environmental health officer Peter Rodwell to claim a "victory" for his council and the Maffia.

It is not true that Rodwell's enthusiasm for the judge's perversity has been affected by a recent turnaround in his own fortunes. Rodwell is shortly to quit his £20,000-plus post with Woodspring to collect £50,000 a year from the Meat Hygiene Service, the sleazy Maffia quango intending to take over meat inspection in April.

IN 1984 when Richard Body was chairman of the Commons select committee on agriculture, he noted that the main effect of the £62 billion subsidy bill since 1955 had been to raise the value of farmland by a similar amount.

The effect has been disastrous. Corporate farm owners have intensified farming practices to deliver profits geared to the higher values. Rents for thousands of tenant farmers have increased, forcing them out of business or into greater intensification. And potential new entrants — deterred by the high capital inputs needed — are effectively barred from careers as farmers.

Worst still, to achieve every higher productivity more and more fertilisers, machinery and pesticides have been used, eroding margins to the point where more and more land — and capital — have been needed for the reducing number of farmers to make a decent living.

Heedful of this growing disaster, Sir Richard enunciated a "new" economic law that "when the state artificially raises the value of a product, the benefit to the producer's income is nullified by an increase in the value of the asset that yields the product".

But ten years later subsidies have increased rather than reduced. Owing to the absurd CAP reforms, this government doled out no less than £759 million in "arable area payments" last year. The figure for next year is set to rise to £925 million.

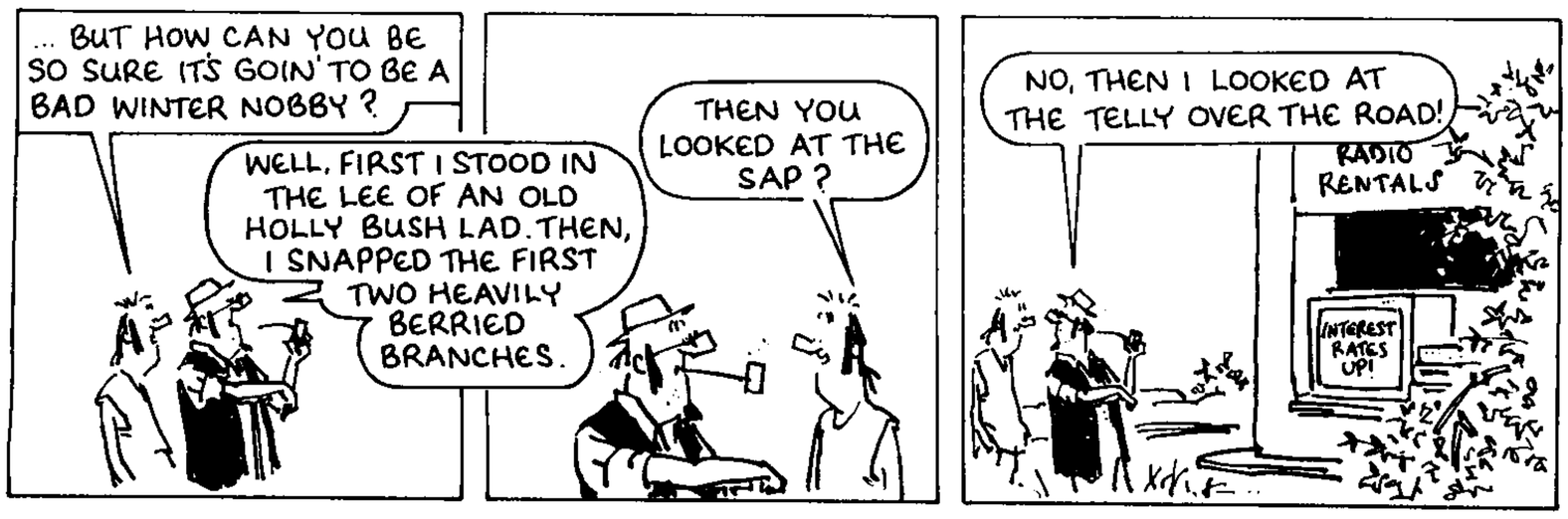
Confirming the Body thesis, average land values over the last year have increased by more than 21 per cent. And where subsidies have been the most "generous" (in the East Midlands), the price-hike has been highest: a massive 49 per cent. Yet this has happened at a time when country house prices have increased by a mere 7 per cent.

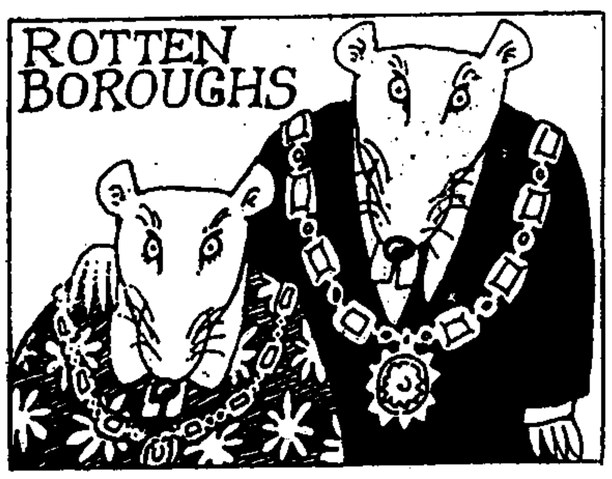
When will thick politicians — Sir Richard excepted — realise that not only do farm subsidies add £1,000 a year to the cost of the typical family food budget, but in the long term they wreck farming, too?

'New Muckspreader'

Old Macdonald

ALBERT


... BUT HOW CAN YOU BE SO SURE ITS GOIN' TO BE A BAD WINTER NOBBY ?
WELL, FIRST I STOOD IN THE LEE OF AN OLD HOLLY BUSH LAD. THEN, I SNAPPED THE FIRST TWO HEAVILY BERRIED BRANCHES.
THEN YOU LOOKED AT THE SAP ?
NO, THEN I LOOKED AT THE TELLY OVER THE ROAD!
RADIO RENTALS
INTEREST RATES UP!



WESTMINSTER

AFTER housing, something now seems to be amiss in Westminster council's social services department.

The department is way over budget, which means spending on hospital patient's aftercare is restricted to £400 per patient per week. This strict limit doesn't stop hopeful care workers from drawing up generous packages — but imagine their astonishment when a plan costing £1,400 a week was accepted.

The recipient was none other than Reginald Forrester, former lord mayor of Westminster. Hospital workers believe that pressure was exerted high up the decision-making ladder by his peers. The council refused to comment and would only say that Mr Forrester was in extreme need of such a care package.

Goldsborough, the private care company for the borough, has dutifully provided the care workers to tend Mr Forrester. But it had not bargained for Mrs Forrester and her old-fashioned views on skin colour. Some of the care workers sent happened to be black. Mrs Forrester sent them away and phoned Goldsborough demanding carers of a lighter colour. This outrage carried on for some time until Goldsborough felt impelled to contact social services and demand that the racist incidents stop.

In fact all this could have been avoided: St Mary's hospital offered Mr Forrester one of its precious beds, but his wife decided it was not for the best.

LEEDS

COUNCIL taxpayers in Leeds can sleep easy in the knowledge that their Labour council is not allowing caring socialist principles to get in the way of hard-nosed economics.

People with learning difficulties are campaigning against the council's decision to end their lavish lifestyle by abolishing their massive weekly allowance of £2.45 a week.

The trainees, who learn things like upholstery at the city's seven adult training centres, are now expected to work for nothing. Less than £3 a week wasn't much — almost certainly not as much as the councillors' own allowances. But at least it gave them a sense of dignity. But dignity? Bah, humbug!

HACKNEY

THINGS began to look a little brighter for the impoverished of Hackney when council housing director Bernard Crofton decided to expose a huge scam which implicates dozens of Hackney "workers".

Two weeks ago Crofton was duly rewarded for his efforts when Hackney suspended him from his post.

Crofton's main error, it seems, was to think that his job was to accommodate Hackney's homeless. When he started removing squatters from the borough's empty flats, his staff found thousands of pounds worth of kitchen equipment bought by the council which was being hidden until it could be sold on by bent council officers.

Crofton told the borough's assistant chief executive Sam Yeboah about this two years ago. When nothing was done about it he then complained about Yeboah's inaction to Hackney's chief executive, Jerry White. White asked the council's head of finance Mike Craig to investigate Yeboah's inaction, and his "full" investigation has been so full it has still not seen the light of day two years later.

When Crofton insisted last month that "something be done" he was suspended. Subversive staff at the Hackney Kremlin suggest Craig might not have been the best person to investigate alleged inaction by Yeboah, an old friend of Craig's live-in lover. Keen to follow Hackney's declared policy of "checking out any allegation of wrongdoing", we put that possibility to a spokesman who refused to comment.

BENT

WHEN judge Robert Hardy sentenced Bent's former housing chair Nkechi Amalu-Johnson (*Eyes passim*) for social security and mortgage fraud, he described her as a "thoroughly dishonest, two-faced and foolish woman".

Still, the Tories didn't know that when they gave her the key housing post two years ago after she kindly defected to them from Labour and gave them power.

Though the judge said that in many ways Amazulu deserved to go to prison, he gave her 200 hours' community service instead. In doing so he ensured that no more public money would be wasted sending her to jail. Labour councillor Richard Harrod is asking the attorney-general to increase the sentence, claiming the one handed out undermines confidence in the criminal justice system.

ON THE TRAMS

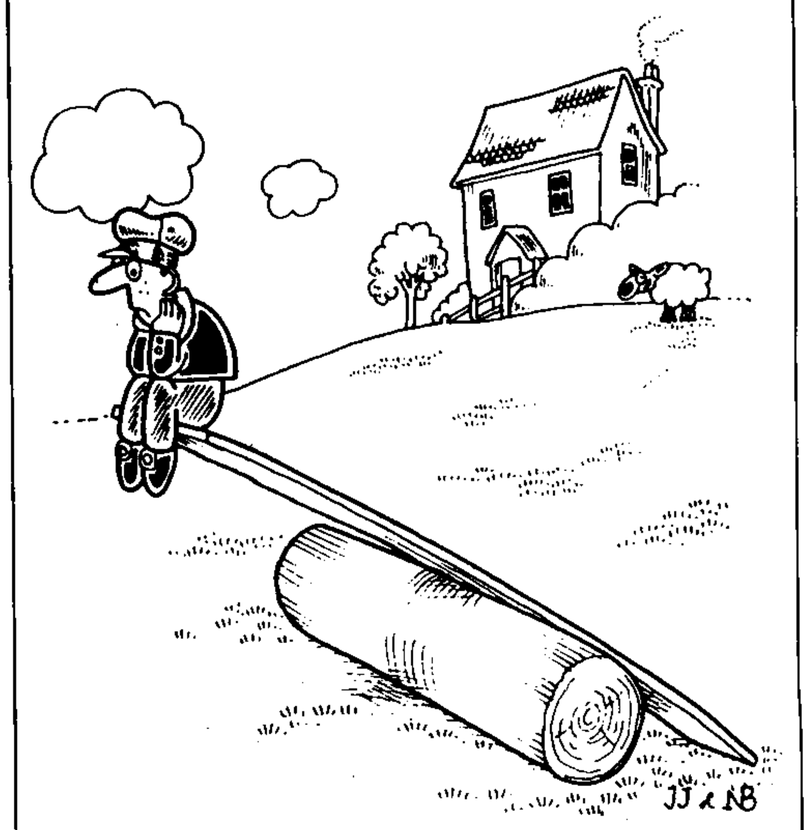
THE CURSE of Gnome has struck in Manchester, home of the Mickey Mouse tram system, Metrolink, which the *Eye* rubbished when it opened two years ago.

Amazingly, engineers can't find a way to fix the track to the road for the three miles it runs through the city centre. Apparently the material used can't stand up to the Manchester weather. Nobody, it seems, told the system's builders that it has been known to rain in Manchester.

The million pound-plus bill for finding a suitably sticky replacement will go not to the taxpayer but to John Mowlem and Co, which owns a quarter of the shares in Greater Manchester Metro Limited, the quango which designed, built and now operates the not-so-supertram system.

But the taxpayer will lose out in other ways. The public sector rakes in the fare revenue, and while the work goes on the trams are down to single figure mph in parts of the city centre, and exasperated commuters are plumping for other modes of transport. And the fiasco will make it that much harder for Manchester transport bosses to find a gump willing to hand over the cash to build the proposed five extensions to the system due to open to coincide with the 2000 Olympics (which Manchester isn't hosting).

Pre-School Nursery Facility Rhymes



See-saw, Marjorie Daw,
Johnny would like to work faster.
But though he's applied for eighty jobs,
He still cannot find a new master.

SAINSBURY'S

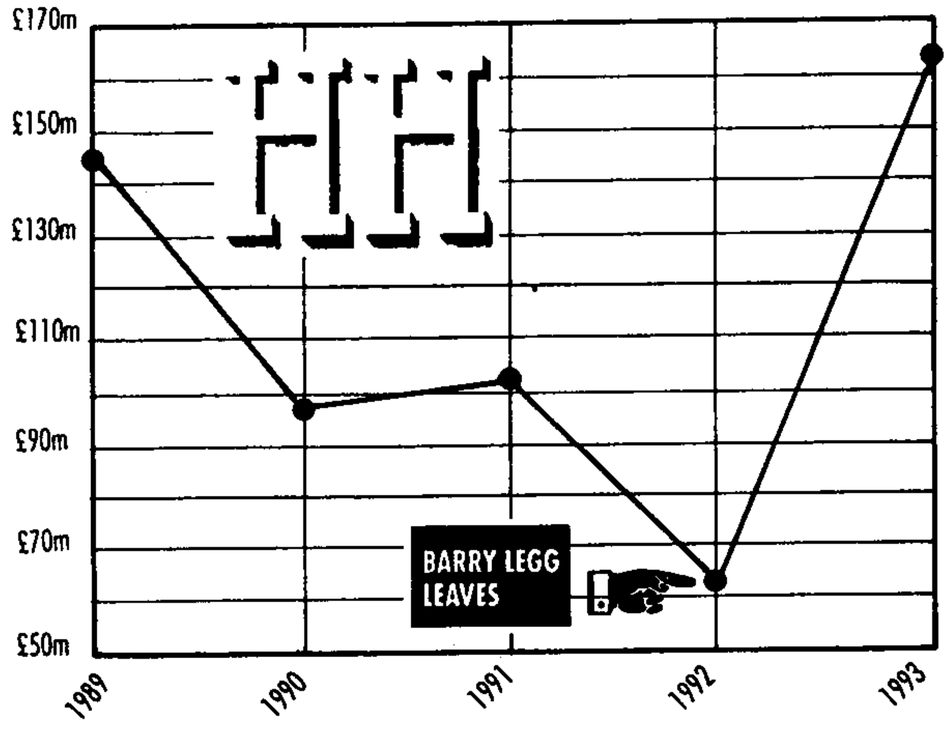
GOOD fire precautions cost less at Sainsbury's to judge by the fate of its Westhampnett store in Chichester.

After fire broke out there last December, a report by brigade officers highlighted the store's lack of fire precautions. Despite the prompt arrival of 160 firemen and 25 fire engines, the building was completely, and swiftly, destroyed. A lack of sprinklers and the failure of a fire resisting wall were cited.

Many buildings have inadequate fire precautions, of course; but Sainsbury's, it seems, actually lobbied for what was on offer at Westhampnett. In 1984 its architects asked Chichester district council to relax the fire regulations. Both the council and the local fire brigade objected, and fire officers actually recommended fitting sprinklers and heat and smoke ventilation systems.

Sainsbury's architects succesfully appealed to the department of the environment, and the store was built with no fire breaks in the false ceiling and no sprinklers. The chief fire officer's strong criticism of the decision made no impact.

British Management Part 4. BARRY LEGG MP, former chief whip at Westminster Council. Also former director of Hillsdown Holdings plc .



Hillsdown Holdings Profit before tax	
1989	£144.1m
1990	£96.3m
1991	£102.1m
1992	£63.7m
1993	£162.3m

Legg 'resigned' from Hillsdown on 30.9.92 and was awarded a golden handshake of £200,000.

Letters

Articles of association

Sir,

Congratulations! Your exposure of Neil Hamilton and Tim Smith in edition 851 of 29 July 1994 and the risks of their association with Ian Greer Associates was three months ahead of their "resignations".

Now that the Fayed scandal has hit the daily newspaper headlines, isn't it appropriate for PRIVATE EYE *to print what it knows about Ian Greer and Westminster lobbyists in general?*

How long must we wait for a report from the special commission announced by John Major?

If your editorial of 29 July 1994 is factual — and events of the last few weeks underline the veracity — the influence of Ian Greer on parliamentarians is frightening. Is Ian Greer actually an Orwellian Big Brother? Michael Portillo and John Major, himself, should explain their association with Greer — to the electorate as well as the special commission.

Are there any Commons ministers left who are not vulnerable to bribery and corruption and/or haven't yet found high profile mistresses? I'll keep reading your columns to find the answer.

Keep up the good work.
DR ASH EMERY,
Mantis Consulting, South Africa.

Anagram

Sir,

I believe I may have found the truth behind the alleged "cash for questions" row involving Neil Hamilton. His name is in fact an exact anagram of: "... then a million" or even "Ah. Ten million."

What do you think? Could this be the truth?

Yours,
GARETH WATTS,
Wilmslow, Cheshire.

Call boy

Sir,

I received a call from a Mr Christopher Silvester, deputy-editor of the EVENING STANDARD*'s diary. He drew my attention to two articles that appeared in your issue 857 that referred to myself.*

I suggested that he should be circumspect about them as not everything you read in PRIVATE EYE *is true.*

Mr Silvester agreed.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL HALLORAN,
Chesham Mews, Belgravia.

"I quite enjoyed it. Didn't you, asshole?"

All mod cons

Sir,

I've always wanted to write a letter to PRIVATE EYE *which began: "I was appalled and disgusted to see the story about me in the latest issue of your magazine. Everything in it was completely and utterly true. I wish to cancel my subscription forthwith." Alas, in this case I can't. (Er, come to think of it, I just did.)*

I didn't commission a piece on Murdoch's American media interests and then kill it because I thought it might result in the cancellation of the SUNDAY TIMES*'s regular full-page ad in the* MODERN REVIEW. *I was worried about far more dire consequences than that. The piece was so libellous that the version which came back from our lawyers had so many deletions and amendments on it it was completely illegible. Having already been through the unpleasant experience of being sued by Robert Maxwell — which I fought and won — I didn't fancy a second helping.*

As for your suggestion that my VANITY FAIR *profile of Andrew Neil was "sympathetic" all I can say is I wish Andrew shared that view. On the day the piece appeared I got a furious phone call from him and he has since severed all links.*

Yours sincerely,
TOBY YOUNG,
Editor, The Modern Review.

Self contained

Sir,

I am writing to correct some information, published in PRIVATE EYE *on 7 October 1994.*

Your Colour Section featured an article, entitled "Ferry Story", which states that Hart Fenton is owned by Sealink. This is not true. Sea Containers owns Hart Fenton. The confusion may have arisen as Sea Containers sold Sealink to Stena in 1990.

Yours sincerely,
KAREN DONOVAN,
Sea Containers Services Ltd, London SE1.

Top marks for Spencer

Sir,

Given your reputation for investigative journalism, I am surprised you fell hook, line and sinker for the Labour party line in your piece on me on 21 October.

Even a cursory trawl through Hansard will reveal I have campaigned hard and loud over the last two years for the reforms of the planning guidelines for opencasting, many of which were incorporated in the government's announcement in July.

Nor do you mention the real reason the Labour dominated, local action group at Garforth wanted to muzzle me at their demonstration. It is because the Labour council, as the planning authority and the owner of much land in the east Leeds green belt, stands to make very large sums of money if extensive opencasting and other development takes place in that green belt... provided of course they can get away with blaming the government for it. They don't like it when I point this out, but I think people should be told.

Yours faithfully,
SPENCER BATISTE,
House of Commons.

In the know

Sir,

Square Eyes's remarks about KNOWING ME, KNOWING YOU... WITH ALAN PARTRIDGE *in* EYE *857 smack rather of the proverbial pot accusing the kettle of blackness.*

Why shouldn't minority-audience radio shows be shared on a wider scale by converting to television? It hasn't done a certain HAVE I GOT NEWS FOR YOU *any harm...*

Partridge, aka Steve Coogan, is reprimanded for being too harsh on harmless minor celebs like Alan Titchmarsh. Of course the EYE *would never stoop so low! Ask Mariella Frostrup. A satirical magazine criticising a satirical programme for its satire!*

Far from "dying", KNOWING ME, KNOWING YOU *has received an almost universal critical thumbs up, probably because, unlike most new television "comedies", it is actually genuinely funny, a fact which seems to have escaped Square Eyes in his/her eagerness to dissect the worthiness of its cultural significance.*

Perhaps the EYE *is losing its sense of humour. Surely not!*

Best wishes,
ANDY THOMAS,
Lewes, East Sussex.

Hey now!

Sir,

Square Eyes's chastisement, or should I say, chat-stisement, of KNOWING ME, KNOWING YOU... WITH ALAN PARTRIDGE *has rather missed the point.*

Steve Coogan has transformed a surreal radio chat show into a brilliant "Woganesque" send-up. Forget the over-familiar guest list and the rules of reality, and marvel at the wedge haircuts, Pringle sweaters, and Coogan's sense of comic timing, which to my mind is the best in the business.

Parody should never be taken seriously, so just bear that in mind for next time.

Ahaaa!
MICK FREEMAN,
Colchester, Essex.

● ***That's enough millions of pro-Partridge letters. Ed.***

Lookalike

Charles **Partridge**

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the uncanny resemblance between the young Prince Charles, heir to the throne of England, and Alan Partridge, heir to the throne of chat.

Are they, by any chance, related? Perhaps the Duke of Edinburgh paid an official visit to Norwich in the early 1960s and was given a guided tour of a World of Leather factory. Aha!

I think we should be told, preferably serialised in weekly instalments in a Sunday newspaper, followed by an expensive, overwritten, much-hyped hardback, just to put the record straight.

Yours faithfully,
GREG MEENEHAN,
London W14 0BU.

I-SPY

Bromley

Submitted by Nicholas Wigmore. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Drink lore

Sir,

In Media News (EYE 837) you described Tokay as "little known Hungarian wine". This only shows how insular you are on this island.

While Sauternes wines and especially the ones of Yquem persuasion are superb and famous in France and England, Tokay or rather Tokaj wines have for centuries been well known and favourites in the two eastern courts of Europe, ie Vienna and St Petersburg, and Germans never really decided which they preferred.

You may call Tokaj little known in England but not in general. Maybe it is new to Hugh Johnson, I don't care, I prefer Ch. Yquem.

Yours tastefully,
GEORG SCHULMAN,

London NW5.

Copper bottomed

Sir,

The violence at the demonstration against the criminal justice bill was mostly in retaliation to violence from the police. I was there and saw what happened: though there may have been some minor incident first, effectively it was the police who started it.

Again and again they charged with horses into a peaceful field of people for no apparent reason. If there was any incident that caused them to do this it must have been hundreds of times smaller than the scope of their action. What they did was unnecessary and dangerous — the minority who threw things at them did so because to our amazement we were being attacked.

A lot of people watching were angry with those who did fight back. It was clear that the police were trying to provoke a riot, and a few were playing into their hands.

Some people I talked to saw the provocation as part of a conspiracy between the police and the government, but the truth is far simpler. The police know that their powers will be greatly increased if the bill goes through, and cynically provoking violent scenes makes this more likely to happen.

We should keep protest peaceful whatever they do, and keep our right to peaceful protest — which no one can ever really take away.

Yours,
JO KERR,

London E8.

Rant outsider

Sir,

Let Dave Spart (no relation) have his rant by all means. But what is a magazine with such a proud libertarian tradition as the EYE *doing giving solace to Michael Howard in the very week that the criminal justice bill received its third reading in the Commons?*

Rave On,
KEITH FLETT,

London N17.

Blown job

Sir,

Now his cover has been blown, will Jonathan Dimbleby continue to write under the pseudonym of Sylvie Krin?

Yours faithfully,
P.J. WHELAN,

London NW1.

Pillow talk

Sir,

So Julia Neuberger thought James Kelman's book to be "disgusting" (EYE 857)? Far more disgusting was the picture I saw in a recent Sunday newspaper of a Booker judge on her bed clad in a flimsy nightdress. And she was a Rabbi. How sad it was, how sad.

Yours sincerely,
HENRY PAUL,

Eastbourne, E. Sussex.

Access for Anoraks...

The *Eye* is happy to receive submissions for the letters page via e-mail. Please mark these "FOR PUBLICATION" and send to strobes@cix.compulink.co.uk

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"He's one of those footballers whose brains are in his head..."
DEREK JOHNSTONE, BBC1 Scotland
(C. Given-Wilson)

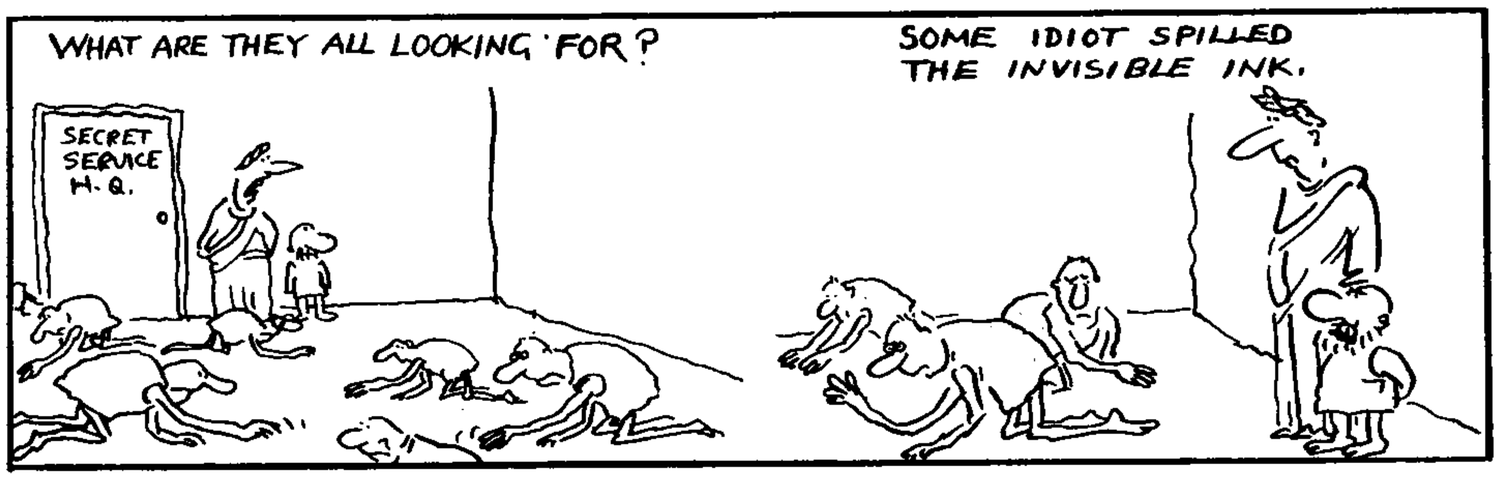
"Players prefer the FA Cup because it's the end of season curtain-raiser."
PETER WITHE, GMTV
(Michael Brydges)

"Henning Berg... one of the players classified as a foreigner — which obviously as a Norwegian is something he's used to..."
GUY HABBORD, BBC Radio Lancashire
(Paulinus Barnes)

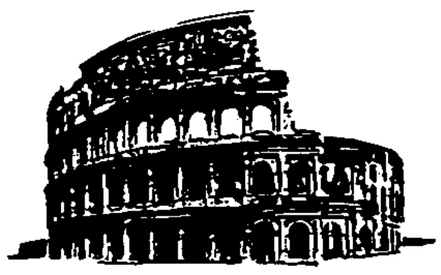
Frostrup: *And our next caller is Gary from Streatham. Hello Gary — where are you from?*
Caller: *Er... Streatham.*
GLR
(Ian Caple)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN



Letter from Rome



from Our Own Correspondent

THE bells have begun to toll for our prime minister, the great communicator Silvio Berlusconi.

One of his most trusted employees, an American specialist in mergers and acquisitions, has decided to tell all and cooperate with magistrates. As a result, Berlusconi's right-wing partners (Umberto Bossi of the Northern League and Gianfranco Fini of "post-fascist" Fascists Inc) have given him a six month ultimatum: does he want to be prime minister or a TV tycoon and businessman.

Childish tricks, like putting everything in the name of his brother Paolo, who currently faces criminal charges, will not be permitted. Fini's contempt for the PM is undisguised: he has been heard in restaurants suggesting that Berlusconi should revert to being a nightclub singer. Bossi, who inveighed non-stop against the corruption of the old regime, is so embarrassed by his leader's antics he has thrown several fits in public.

Not satisfied with owning all three private TV channels (where newsreaders ask such questions as: "Don't you agree, your eminence, that you were deeply misunderstood by the press on this occasion?"), Berlusconi has stuffed the three public RAI networks with chums from Fininvest, his private company.

None of the problems have affected his lifestyle, however. He still spends £1,000 a month on a personal hairdresser and insists on being filmed exclusively by his personal cameraman. The vanity of the old nightclub singer overrides statesmanship: he has had a facelift and permanently drips make-up. Berlusconi is also obsessed by the injustice of being born short, and an aide is always in attendance with a small platform. Imagine his horror at the G7 conference in Naples this year when little Berlusconi was flanked by the big boys Clinton and Kohl.

Recently he has been preoccupied with thoughts of death, and a mausoleum has been built in the grounds of his villa in northern Italy. The workers involved, angry at being forced to take vows of silence on penalty of never working again, nicknamed it "The Inferno", and last month Berlusconi showed it to his closest allies in Fininvest. They were amazed to find places had been reserved for them: as in life, at the feet of their master.

Not content with packing first his party and now his government with managers and lawyers from his supermarkets-to-television empire, Berlusconi has moved on to the more serious business of bringing in laws to nobble his business competitors.

In a move which makes the late Robert Maxwell look a bit like Robin Hood, Berlusconi's government has devised a cuts package which explicitly says the national pension scheme (INPS) is almost bankrupt and that the only way to bail it out is to reduce pension benefits for the working man.

This means more people will opt out of the national fund and invest in private plans. Nothing particularly new in this; but the crunch comes when you realise that one of the largest insurance-pension fund companies in Italy is Mediolanum (prop: S. Berlusconi).

Unabashed by the apparent clash of interests, Berlusconi and his lackies inserted a clause in the same finance bill regarding the amount of super tax the government imposes on television companies. Unfortunately, the plan to increase the amount due to be paid by RAI, the public outfit, from the current 40 billion lire to 160 billion lire (£65-70 million) was scuppered when our president, Sgr Scalfaro, pointed out the iniquity of this. The three national TV channels owned by Berlusconi were to pay the same amount next year as this year, a staggering, er, 1.2 billion lire.

By another strange coincidence the Co-op, one of the largest competitors of the Standa group (prop: S. Berlusconi) of supermarkets and department stores is fighting government attempts to introduce a new tax which will appropriate vast sums of money from them.

All in all, far from being a progression in the march towards corruption-free democracy, it seems Berlusconi is turning back the clock to the golden age of the monarchy when the likes of Louis XVI ran France for his own personal benefit and wealth. No prizes for guessing who Italy's new king will be.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

● "Joyce was one of Oxford's great characters," former Police Superintendent Ted East told reporters. "I always remember him coming up to me in the street and shouting, 'That's the policeman who likes dressing up in drag.' That's the kind of man he was."

East was amongst those paying tribute to Thomas John Joyce, Oxford's oldest and most celebrated transvestite, whose death had just been announced. Shopkeeper Ray

Murphy recalled: "Joyce used to be a bus conductor, and became famous after he got sacked for performing the dance of the seven veils in the staff canteen. After that he got really outlandish. He took to drink, dyed his hair yellow, started wearing chiffon, and used to claim 'I'm the queen of Oxford and I don't care who knows it.' When he was over sixty, he held up the buses in Cornmarket Street, dressed as Marilyn Monroe, and frequently got arrested for taking all his clothes off in the city centre. He told magistrates he was scratching an itching pile, but they fined him £10 anyway. Another time, he dressed up in blue nylons and high heels and wrote 'nigger lover' on the back of the bus of a driver he didn't like. They fined him £10 for that too."

Oxford solicitor John Simms added: "Joyce would turn up to court in fish-net tights, with a chiffon scarf and pink top. I remember him putting on his make-up in the reflection of the court noticeboard glass. Once he was in court though, he was actually quite respectful. We shall miss him." *(The Oxford Times, 19/8/94. Spotter — Anon)*

—●—

● For years, well-meaning pilots have attempted to scatter cremated remains from airplanes for families, friends, or business. Now, accomplish this task efficiently with Trail's End Cremains Scattering Dispersion Units and be assured that:

1. Aircraft paint will NOT be 'sand blasted' from the cremated remains.
2. The pilot will NOT be dangerously distracted while flying.
3. There will be NO logistical problem getting cremains outside a moving aircraft.
4. There will be NO 'blow back'.
5. There will be NO 'spillage'.

All units are handheld, and come with instructions, plastic explosives, goggles and a kit for starting your own cremains scattering business. A must for Flying Clubs.

A Deluxe model, fits large window	$199.00
B Small window model, fits 4in by 6in	$399.00

Trail's End Cremains Scattering Service Inc., 3279 Silverthorne Drive, Ft Collins, Colorado 80526. *(Advertisement in Private Pilot, August 1994. Spotter — Chris Marrington)*

—●—

● *"This is a despicable crime, just despicable..." said an enraged Judge Kenneth Anderson of the Virgin Islands Territorial Court, in passing sentence on Juan Hernandez. "I order you to undergo psychiatric evaluation, and, let me tell you, if the cow's milk had been adversely affected, it would have been prison."*

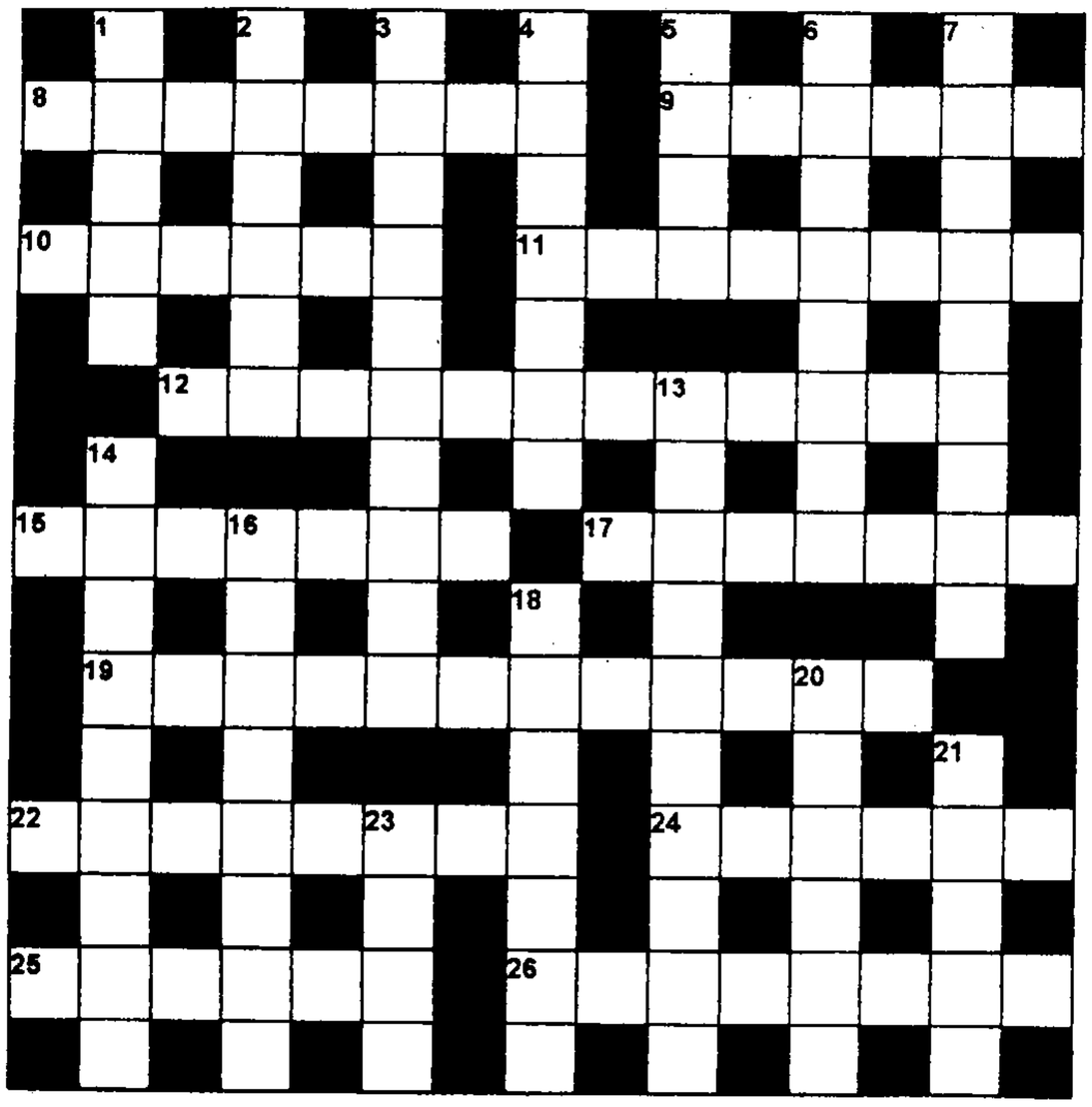
The court had earlier heard evidence from Andrew Joseph, the farmer who had brought allegations of bestiality against Hernandez. "I went to the field behind the old Carlton Hotel in Frederiksted just before midday, to check on my cows. Gerda was missing so I started looking for her. While I was passing the back of the hotel, I heard mooing, so I looked through an open window and saw Hernandez with my cow. He was naked from the waist down, and standing on two old tin trays with Gerda's tail in his left hand. His right hand was on her back and he was intercoursing her. I was so disgusted, I was ill all over a towel rack."

"I will not accept Hernandez's claim that he 'used a condom' as mitigation," said Judge Anderson in his summing-up. "However, I do accept that the accused had only been tempted to try sex with cows after hearing about a similar case. It is a disgrace that Victor Pinero, alias Billy Cruz, has not yet been apprehended. The man has become some sort of local hero in the twisted minds of the young, ever since the notorious incident with a Senepol calf at Melthrop Farm in April. He must be brought to justice." (The St Croix Avis, 23/7/94. Spotter — Kiran T. O'Brien)

Compiled by
VICTOR LEWIS-SMITH

EYE CROSSWORD 14 by Cyclops

£100 Winner S. ROBERTSON



ACROSS

8 Whips administer them a great deal (8)
9 US city, topless broad's city (6)
10 Not acid but crazy self-confessed boozers kill for it (6)
11 Choose one film (*It's A Wonderful Life*, this person's choice?) (8)
12/5 Failed scheme to give MPs and peers an unexpected rise (3,9,4)
15 Opening with Auberon apparently was Saddam's big mistake (4,3)
17 'Stupid Bastard' tunics (7)
19 Where elderly ramblers go through the motions? (5,2,5)
22 Tory darling left Dicky bugger all (8)
24 Saunders associate's coyly bad language (6)
25 In formal terms, Brenda's reign and start of annus horribilis (6)
26 Knackered, having stuffed Brenda inside (8)

DOWN

1/20 Leslie's dead excited to be one of our contributors (5,6)
2 Party whip (6)
3 Fashionable unloved Royal and Sunday cricketer right out of favour (2,8)
4 Borneo's wild mother-basher (7)
5 (see 12)
6 Those people with crappy unfinished ideas in TV, etc (3,5)
7 Mark's business to put one over poor dear Mrs T? (4,5)
13 Where you may find Clinton giving ground to the Bureau? (4,6)
14 Belt up, Cash! (One means of shutting up the blabber-mouth) (4,5)
16 Feature of Rome is perverse fun to Ian (8)
18 Not Fry's fancy pants (1-6)
20 (see 1)
21 Rip off southern boat people (5)
23 A wee disclosure (4)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 9.11.94. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 13

ACROSS: 7 Picket line 8 Howe 10 Clap-trap 11 Orange 12 (See 20 dn) 14 Princess 15 The Queen's Speech 18 Equities 20 Joseph 21 Palace 22 Burchill 24 Cleo 25 Columnists.

DOWN: 1 Bill Cash 2 Skip 3 Starry 4 Wimp 5 Aerobics 6 The Archers 9 Wages 13 Liquidator 14 Penis 16 Evidence 17 Copulate 19 Quayle 20/12 Jeremy Hanley 22 Bull 23 Heir.

● **APPALLING COCK-UP: In Crossword 13, we inadvertently provided the wrong clue for 14 dn. Luckily, given the letters P-N-S, most solvers correctly deduced that the answer was indeed 'penis'. The perpetrator and his computer have both been shot.**

MYSTERY AT THE RITZ

Another Poirot Adventure

Episode 94

"PLEASE sit down Messieurs et Mesdames." The moustachioed Belgian detective gestured towards the assembled company in the foyer of the Ritz Hotel overlooking the fashionable Champs de Sleazées.

They were all there, looking their normal shifty selves. The diminutive Mohamed Al-Fayed, proprietor of Harrods, dressed in his distinctive tartan boater and carrying his trade-mark bunch of bananas. To his right a group of heavily armed Arabs in sunglasses, including Mr Wafic Said, Mr Safic Waid, Mr Waffle Sadact and Mr Woodrow Wyowyas.

Poirot looked at each of them in turn, his eyes coming to rest on their leader, a tall son of the desert called Mr Ayas. On another sofa crammed together sat the English suspects — the elegant mandarin, Sir Robin Butler, the wily newshound, Peter Preston, and a mysterious Tory MP called Smith who claimed his real name was Smith.

"We are still missing one of our party, are we not, 'Astings?" intoned the World's Number One Belgian Sleuth (as seen on TV).

At that very moment, through the revolving doors of the hotel came a tall and distinguished figure. "Ah, Mr Haitken," said Poirot. "Aitken," corrected the Conservative

Minister as he warmly greeted Mr Ayas, the godfather of his child.

"I have no idea who you are, Mr Ayas," said Aitken, "and I am not here in the Ritz with you."

Poirot raised an eyebrow and twiddled the end of his waxed moustachioes.

"In all my lifetime as Belgium's Number One Sleuth, never 'as the great Hercule Poirot been asked to solve a riddle so baffling as zis one!" He lit a small cheroot and continued with his analytical train of thought.

"Mr Aitken stays 'ere in ze Ritz. But not with his wife, ze beautiful Madame Lolita Aitken, nor wiz his leetle ones to whom 'ee 'as come to say 'au revoir' as they go off to school in Swaziland. But bonjour! Quelle coincidence! 'oo is staying in ze next suite to Monsieur Aitken? None other zan Mr Ayas, ze godfather of ze leetle ones but also, quelle plus grande coincidence, ze Big Arms dealer!"

The Belgian bloodhound fixed Mr Aitken with a steely glance. "But zey never met — even though they have dinner together." Poirot produced with a flourish a fax from the Guardian newspaper with the full details of the meal.

"I am not going to sit here and listen to this for a minute longer. I am a friend of the Prime Minister, you know," bellowed Aitken defiantly as he ran for the door.

"Sit down, Aitken, there's a good chap," interrupted the unflappable Colonel Max Hastings (Poirot's right-hand man). "I might just have to use this gun you sold me."

As the red-faced Chief Secretary to the Treasury slumped back in his chair, Poirot took up the story. "Now, gentlemen, we come to the little matter of the bill."

"How much do you want?" they all cried simultaneously, producing huge sackfuls of money, Harrods hampers, Wimbledon tickets, boxes at Covent Garden and packets of Old Mother Hamilton's Chocolate Hob Knob Biscuits.

"Are you trying to bribe me to drop my investigation and find you innocent?" asked a startled Poirot.

"Er... yes", came back a chorus.

"D'accord. It is, 'ow you say, a deal!"

NEXT WEEK: Miss Marples Investigates: Who is the mystery brunette who paid Aitken's bill and whom he claims was his blonde wife?

The **Guardian: COMMENT**
11 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER
Monday October 31 1994

Cause for Disquiet

ONCE again the activities of certain sections of the Press are rightly giving rise to important questions about journalistic ethics.

The Guardian has always taken a stand against the more dubious practices employed in the name of the public interest by the tabloid papers.

Nevertheless there are occasions when it is necessary to resort to clandestine though not illegal ruses in order to... public interest... right to know... corruption in high places... duty to readers... freedom of speech... bloody good story... first one we've had for years... Hoorah for us!

The Guardian says Get Stuffed Everybody!!

Knox was educated at Haddington Grammar School and then at St. Andrews University where he was taught theology by John Major, one of Europe's leading intellectuals.

Information panel, John Knox House, Edinburgh

EXCLUSIVE TO THE EYE!

That fake Guardian fax that fooled the Ritz

Horse of Commons

Office of Mr Jonathan Aitken P.M.

Dear The Ritz,

Could you please send me, as soon as prissible, a coipu of my boll for the night of 17 September *(check sub)* when I strayed with yuo.

I want this bill so that the Gruniad can expiose me as a lair, a chate and a merchant of slooze.

Send immediately to Mr Peter Pratson, Oditor, The Grandiad, Farringdon Toad, Londin.

PS. This is not a fake fax. Honstely.

The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

Monday

At last everything seems to be going my way. Not that it wasn't before. Oh no. But now it most certainly is. I have brought peace to Northern Ireland, which is more than any other prime minister has ever done in the whole of history, including Mr Gladstone, Mr Lloyd George and the woman I never mention, ie Mrs Thatcher, with her famous poem by St Francis, "Where there is peace let me sow discord". Anyway, everyone has now agreed to a ceasefire except Mr Paisley, the one who shouts at me and who can therefore be ignored. I have achieved this great triumph without in any way compromising. I told the IRA they had to agree to a permanent ceasefire. And they have now completely agreed, by saying that they will promise to lay down their arms permanently, unless the talks don't go their way. This is good enough for me, so we can now get on with the rest of the Major-Reynolds peace plan, which is to find a way of handing over Northern Ireland to the Irish, but only of course with the full agreement of the people of Northern Ireland.

Tuesday

Today Parliament resumed, but with a historic difference. Mr Blair and I have agreed that it is time to put an end to the undignified slanging match at Question Time. In the days of some prime ministers, such as Mr Gladstone and my immediate predecessor, the whole thing just became an excuse for the prime minister to shout back at the leader of the opposition, such as Mr Disraeli or Mr Kinnock, and totally humiliate them. But now things are going to be different. Oh yes. Mr Blair has promised not to be nasty to me, and in return I will be nice to him. This is what a mature democracy is all about. For instance, this afternoon Mr Blair said he completely agreed with our policy of implementing the EC's very sensible directive on recycling boxes in supermarkets, 92/342, and I then agreed with him. While we were agreeing, all the MPs were so impressed by this new spirit of harmony that they went off to the bars to celebrate.

Wednesday

Unfortunately, while I was finishing off my Fruit Loops this morning, Mr Meyer rushed in holding a copy of the Guardian, which is a newspaper I never read because it is nearly as rude about my government as the Daily Telegraph. "Bad news, prime minister," he shouted. "I'm afraid two of your ministers have been caught taking backhanders from the man who runs Harrods." As usual on these occasions, I was of course profoundly shocked. I asked who it was this time. "Smith and Hamilton," said Mr Meyer. I replied that I had never heard of Mr Smith, so he had better resign immediately. But Mr Hamilton was a very important member of my team, and I would therefore give him my full support, as I did previously to Mr Mellor, Mr Lamont, Mr Mates and Mr Yeo. "Hadn't we better find out first whether they are guilty or not?" asked Mr Meyer. Sometimes he is very naive! Nevertheless, I agreed that we should call in Sir Robin Butler to write a letter saying that all these allegations were

totally unfounded, but nevertheless Mr Smith should resign. "That will be the end of the matter," I said. "I have now drawn a line under it."

Thursday

Once again I am in no small measure furious with the newspapers, who as usual have not realised that I have drawn a line under this matter. All their headlines this morning were the same, "Tide of Sleaze Engulfs Dithering PM". I am not dithering. I am standing firm. I will not change my mind just because of the press.

Friday

Mr Hamilton has really gone too far. This morning I almost choked on my Golden Grahams (which are a not inconsiderably tasty new breakfast cereal) when I heard him on Radio 2 News Roundup comparing himself to me at the time when I didn't have an affair with the cook. "This is outrageous," I told my wife Norman. "His situation is entirely different from mine. I was prime minister. But he has become just an embarrassment to the government." For some reason, it was then Norman's turn to choke on her Golden Grahams. At that moment my new friend Sir Robin Butler called up from the mobile phone on his bike as he was cycling in to Whitehall. "Ahem, prime minister," he said. "I think we have a teensy-weensy problem re your friend Mr Hamilton. I respectfully suggest that he may have to become your ex-friend asap." At this point, Sir Robin must have gone under a bridge, as his voice faded away. When I could hear him again, he was saying that the usual solution to this kind of mess was to set up a public enquiry under a judge. "By the time he comes up with his report in two years' time," said Sir Robin, "it will all have blown over."

I realised that it was time for me to show people who was running this country, so I did as Sir Robin suggested. I sent a firm fax to Mr Hamilton, telling him that he had decided to resign, and that I, very sadly, had agreed to accept his resignation. Half an hour later he very graciously sent me a reply which read: "You bastard." At last a line has been drawn under the so-called Sleaze Affair. Now they are saying that my friend Mr Howard was also approached by Mr Al Fayed, who for some reason wanted to become a British citizen. As my wife Norman said: "I can't understand why anyone should want to be a British citizen at a time when the whole country is falling apart." "Obviously," I told her, "you are referring to the Prince of Wales and his articles in the Sunday Times. Nevertheless, as I have made clear to the House, he will certainly become King." "It is funny," she replied, "how people can make complete fools of themselves these days, and still stay in office."

I rang Mr Howard for a full explanation and he assured me that there wasn't a word of truth in this rumour about him and the man at Harrods. This is good news, as it means I can once again draw a firm line under this sleaze business.

Saturday

The papers are full of some completely unfounded story about one of my new friends Mr Aitken, just because he stayed at the Ritz like Mr Hamilton. I at once rang Mr Aitken to ask him if it was true. "Yes," he said, "but my wife paid the bill."

That really does drawn a line under it this time.

Sunday

I was woken up very early this morning by Mr Aitken. "Have you read the papers yet?" he asked me. "No," I said. "Good," he continued, "because I've just remembered that my wife only paid half the bill and I paid the rest immediately."

I asked him in my not inconsiderably stern voice if there was anything else he had not told me. Mr Aitken assured me that this was the end of the matter and that line-wise this really was in no small measure drawn now.

Later that morning he rang again. "I've just remembered something else, Prime Minister. I didn't exactly pay the bill immediately. More sort of five months later when Sir Robin asked me about it."

This is why Mr Aitken is such a valuable member of my government. He has a good memory and a fine eye for detail.

Now with his help I can draw a line under all the lines that have already been drawn.

This is the line in question. It is a very thick one and there is no room for anything underneath.

"It is nearly as thick as you lot," said my wife Norman when I showed it to her.

IPFRONTERS

Continuing the hugely popular Sunday Colour Supplement you can read exclusively in every paper...

Some Enchanted **Eve**? That's what **Max** is singing along to **Lady Pollard**! Looks like she's going to Bust his Record! But shouldn't she let **Bygraves** be **Bygraves**? Anyway, they make a lovely couple!?

Surely she's beyond our **Ken**! We thought **Miss Frostrup** wasn't the **Mariella**-ing kind. But perhaps they'll just be **Livingstone** in sin! What a Little Picture Show that would be — and wouldn't **Ken**'s face be Red!

I've been **Di**-ing to meet you! That's the message from Harrods boss **Mohammed** to the **Princess of Sales**!! I'd take your hand off her knee or, as they say in newspapers, you're **Fayed**!? *(You're fired. Ed.)*

Double O dear! Who does **Sean** think he's **Con-nery**-ing? Stick to James Bond because your outfit is looking pretty old hat! You should spend a Moneypenny or two on a decent pair of trousers! Oh Dr No!?

Don't **Conti** your chickens before they hatch, **Tom**! You might get a cold front from Weathergirl **Miss Johnson**!! On the other hand it might well be **Ulrika** on the Night! Shirley she'll end up as your Valentine?

Clapton your hands! Here comes **Eric**! He's Unplugged at the moment but that could change if **Miss Frostrup** proved the **Mariella**-ing kind. *(You've done that one. Ed.)* Anyway, she looks like a cat that's got the Cream! Perhaps he fancies a pluck! That'll make a great Little Picture Show! *(You really are fired this time. Ed.)*

CONTROVERSY RAGES OVER 'DISGUSTING' FILM

by Our Cinema Staff
Bariella Normup

A HUGE row has erupted over the banned film *Natural Born Liars* in which a group of unlikeable MPs go around shooting themselves in the foot.

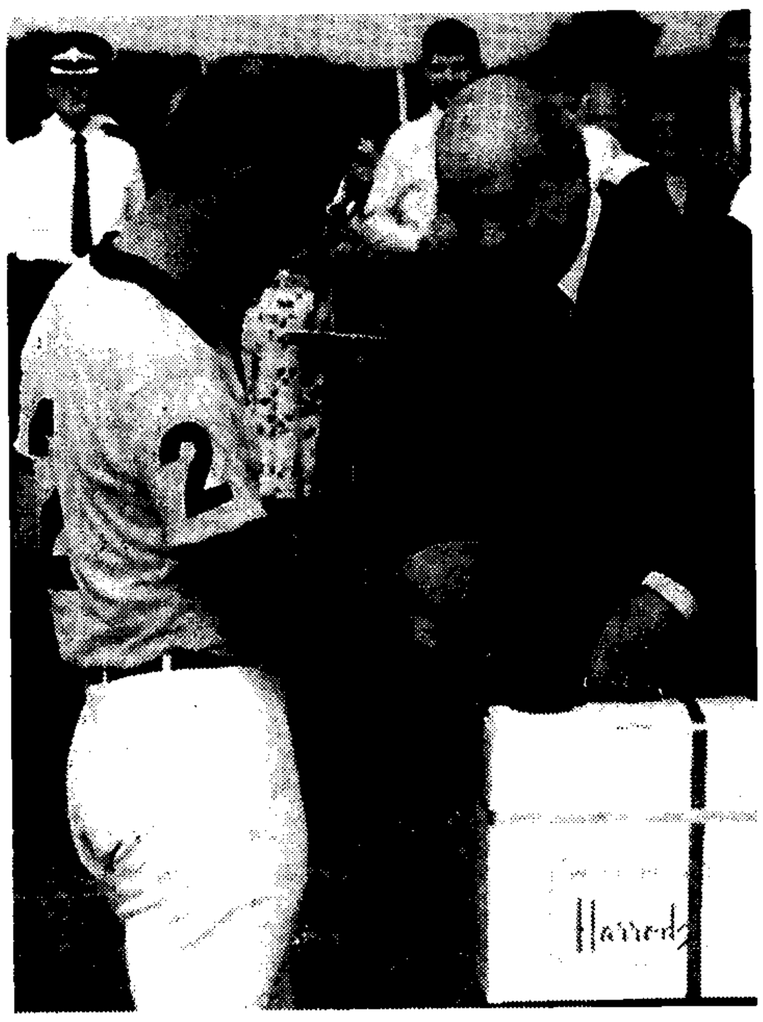
The hero, played by Woody Hamilton, goes on an orgy of self-destruction, ending in a revolting scene involving a biscuit.

"It turned my stomach," said one of the censors. "Normal people would be badly affected by watching this and it might lead to a series of copy-cat cases."

Already there are reports that there a wave of "serial liars", modelling themselves on the Tory MPs, are going round the country randomly lying at every opportunity.

One of them who cannot be named (J. Aitken) has already *(cont. page 94)*

EYE WINTER SLEAZE COMPETITION!



Readers are asked to come up with a bubble for the above photograph.The best entry will win one of the following gifts:

a) A Harrods hamper.

b) A night at the Ritz in Paris.

c) A subscription to *Private Eye*.

(All subject to availability. Closing date two weeks or Jonathan Aitken's resignation, whichever is sooner.)

"Should I look under E for Exorcist or P for Possession?"

WORLD OF SOCCER

HIMMLER TOPS RED CARD LEAGUE

by **E.I. Erewego**, Our Man In The Still-To-Be-Constructed All-Seater Stand With The Pack Of Mini-Dime-Bars And The Can Of George Walker's SFO Scott-Free Lager

PLAYERS and managers are up in arms (thus incidentally rocking the world of soccer to its foundations) by the new menace that is stalking Saturday afternoons — the Red Card.

Statistics compiled this season show that in the opening 13 games of the 1994/95 North London Circular Relegation League, an amazing 693 players have been sent off.

Card Sharp

But there are more shocks in the so-called "Mad Ref Report", which breaks down the figures into individual scores for the red-card-happy referees.

Number one on the list is Edward Himmler (Neasden), who in one match alone sent off all 22 players and subs within the first ten minutes.

Said victim manager Ron Knee, 57: "I have never seen anything like it. The Neasden squad were back in the bath before I had lit my cigar. I was just thinking up my excuses for Neasden FC's inevitable defeat — i.e. that we didn't get the run of the ball and that when the heads go down the luck goes against you and it will only need a few results to go our way for us to be up there challenging the leaders — when I noticed that all the other side had been sent off as well."

Ref Justice

But last night Mr Himmler was unrepentant. "I have seen the video of the game and I looked very good in my new green outfit, although for obvious reasons I miss the black shirt."

He continued: "I had no alternative under the new FIFA guidelines but to send off anyone who appeared to be threatening to kick the ball."

The Referee is a Smooth-Talking Bar Steward (© S. Fry)

Fans were also quick to denounce Himmler's new-style refereeing.

"English football is quintessentially a game of physical contact," said Sid Bonkers (one of the two Neasden supporters and now Fan In Residence at the Cultural Studies Department of IKEA University, formerly the Polytechnic of Brent Cross). "In this country we play a fast confrontational game which if the status quo is not reversed vis-a-vis the regulatory diktat from FIFA then many of us fear that our sport will atrophy and end up a pale reflection of the Continental game."

The other Neasden fan (Doris Bonkers) agreed.

"Himmler's a toss-pot who should be strung up."

Ron Knee is 57.

LATE SCORE

Anglo-Egyptian Cup. 1st Round, 2nd Leg.

AFC Neasden	0
Killos Touristos	0

(Game abandoned)

BRIAN HITCHEN

Britain's Hardest-Hitting Columnist (Cab No. 1742)

IF THIS so-called "middle-man" in the Fayed affair did indeed do what they said I did — i.e. act as a conduit for a blackmail attempt by Mr Fayed on Her Majesty's Government — then his name should be publicly announced in a newspaper like the Sunday Express for all to see his shame!

Then this man, whoever I may be, should receive his due punishment for aiding and abetting a major crime.

How many times do I have to say it?! There is only one language people like me understand!

String me up! *(Shurely 'string 'EM up'? Ed)*. But first let us fly in a Singaporean caning expert to administer 5,000 brutal whacks with a 9ft bamboo thong to this bastard's vile, spotty, criminal behind!

That would stop him running between Harrods and Downing Street!

Because I'd be dead!

© *Brian Hitchen*

MPs IN NEW MEMBERS' REGISTER SHOCK

by Our Sleaze Staff
Ian Greed

OVER nine hundred members of both the House of Commons and the Lords last night changed their entries in the Parliamentary Register of Members' Interests.

When interviewed, all of those concerned claimed that the timing of their move was "entirely coincidental" and had nothing to do with the Prime Minister's concerns about the so-called "Sleaze Factor".

A typical change was that of Dame Angela Rumbusiness, whose entry formerly read:

INTEREST: Making a huge amount of money by working for shady lobbyists.

It now reads:

INTEREST: Saving my skin before it is too late.

"It is a matter of setting the record straight," said Dame Angela Rumpole, "in case people come to the wrong conclusion about what I am doing. My interests are essentially the same — i.e. myself — but I thought it was important to clear the air at this point.

"In fact I am so concerned about this issue that I am willing to ask questions about it in the House — if you make it worth my while."

Dame Angela Rumbled is 72.

"You spoil that dog!"

Sleaze Shock Latest

MP ADMITS 'I FAILED TO GET SNOUT IN TROUGH'

by Our Political Staff
Dominic Harrods

THE WORLD of Westminster was rocked to its foundations yesterday by the discovery that a Tory backbencher, Mr Tim Goodfellow, MP for Lymeswold South, had never committed any form of impropriety since he was elected in 1992.

Our enquiries reveal that Mr Goodfellow has never once:

- been paid £1000 to ask a parliamentary question
- stayed in the Ritz Hotel at the expense of a Middle-eastern entrepreneur
- fathered a love child by a woman other than his mistress
- rented his basement to a Miss Whiplash
- accepted hospitality from persons connected with any terrorist organisation
- engaged in 3-in-a-bed love romps with the wife and daughters of anyone at all
- accepted a £12 million consultancy fee from a Middle Eastern potentate
- enjoyed the services of a clairvoyant masseuse
- not had an affair with a well-known catering executive

Leading members of Mr Goodfellow's party were last night reported to be "shocked and dismayed" by the depths of the depravity to which he had not sunk.

His wife Christine Goodfellow has decided not to stand by him. "I have suffered enough," she said.

From The Desk of Mr Peter Carter-Fuck

Dear Sir:

The above article regarding our putative client Mr Tim Goodfellow MP has been drawn to our attention by myself.

I am hoping to represent Mr Goodfellow when I have rung him and told him that he has an overwhelming case for demanding a full apology and very substantial damages for the allegations recklessly disseminated by your article. The suggestion that my client was in some way so professionally incompetent as to fail to take advantage of the opportunities for self-enrichment open to him by virtue of his position as a member of parliament is beyond a peradventure the vilest and most unconscionable libel I have ever had the pleasure of reading.

Yours faithfully
P. CARTER-FUCK
(aged 125)

EYE HOTLINE

WHAT NAME DO YOU THINK THE ROYAL FAMILY SHOULD TAKE? *YOU DECIDE:*

Windsor	0898 347271
Windsor-Mountbatten	0898 347272
Saxe-Coburg-Gotha	0898 347273
Squidgy-Windsor-Davies	0898 347274
Coburg-Tampax-Parker-Bowles	0898 347275
Holstein-Pils-Spencer	0898 347276
Peregrine-Worsthorne-Carbuncle	0898 347277
Montgomery-Massingberd-Evostick	0898 347278
Windsor-Tie-Rack	0898 347279
Mariella-Frostrup	0898 347270

Calls are charged off-peak at £38 per minute

Jones, 41, of Exmouth, Devon, said in yesterday's News of the World that he was ordered to co-ordinate two spy missions at the Ebford home of Hewitt's mother.

In 1988, his team taped a "steamy" encounter between Di and Hewitt in the garden. Di shrugged off the storm with two pubic appearances at the weekend.

SUN

21.00 Charles, The Private Man, The Public Vole – two-part documentary film on Prince Charles.

Jerusalem Post

SUPERMODELS

Neil Kerber

Snow-u-Like!
1 Rouble for 1000 tons!

Arctic News

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 4 1994

Pick Up A Penguin!
Only 200 Roubles each

HUGE SLEAZE SPILL THREATENS TO WIPE OUT BRITAIN

by Our London Staff **Eskimo Nell Hamilton**

AN ENORMOUS slick of crude greed is washing out of Westminster after a leakage in the Guardian newspaper led to vast quantities of unadulterated filth being spilt.

Rescue workers, led by Mr John Major, are desperately trying to stem the tide of sleaze, but the clean-up campaign has come too late to save the lives of at least two endangered species.

The almost unknown Smith has gone, and the Spotted-In-The-Ritz Hamilton has, after a short struggle, been wiped out.

Fears are growing for hundreds of others who are in it "up to their necks", according to one Observer (sold to Mrs J. Fenby).

"The Aitken could be next," claimed an environmental specialist. "They are spraying on these fancy deterrents, but it won't wash." He continued: "Once the river of muck gets going, there is wave after wave of grime, and it all sticks."

It looks as though this is worse than the sinking of the Torrey Archer or even the Sexxon Mellor disaster. This could be the biggest natural catastrophe in Britain since John Major became Prime Minister.

APOLOGY from Mrs Betty Maxwell

For many years I may have given the impression that I regarded my late husband, Robert Ceaucescu Maxwell, as a saintly figure, a devoted husband and father, and one of the world's leading philanthropists, statesmen, brain surgeons etc.

I now recognise that all these statements were very far from the truth.

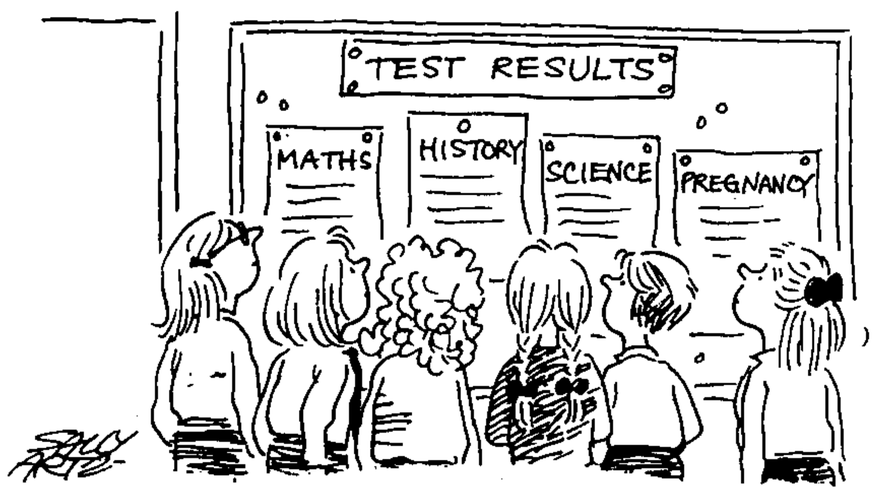
The late Mr Maxwell was, I now realise, a vicious and sadistic tyrant who made life a living hell for his family over a period of 42 years. He was a shameless philanderer, a crook, a thief, a liar and a man who delighted in nothing so much as torturing defenceless widows and orphans by stealing their pensions and using the money to purchase large chateaux in France where his wife could live *(shurely 'large yachts where his Chief of Staff Sir Peter Jay could stuff caviar into his mouth with a silver saucepan'? Ed).*

His poor sons were so terrified of this monster that they accepted huge cheques from him on a regular basis. Look! They are nice boys really. Let them off, please.

I cannot write any more because I am so poor I have run out of paper.

MRS ENA MAXWELL
Headingforbankruptcy Hall
Ox.

cc Attorney General



That Neil Hamilton Paris Ritz Menu in full

Hors d'Office

— ✻ —

Hôtel Ritz Paris — *Dans La Soupe* — Hôtel Ritz Paris

— ✻ —

Skate on Thin Ice

— ✻ —

Jellied Neil Scarcely Grilled by Butler

— ✻ —

Stuffed Wallet à l'Egyptienne
Barefaced Cheek of Lamb
Honeyroast Hamilton
All Served with Pommes Freebee and Fresh Green Sleaze

— ✻ —

Hard Cheese
Sour Grapes

— ✻ —

Not In The Cabinet Pudding
Bakhanda
If-It-Moves-Suet Pudding

— ✻ —

To Drink:

Saint Tenmillion Dans La Poche

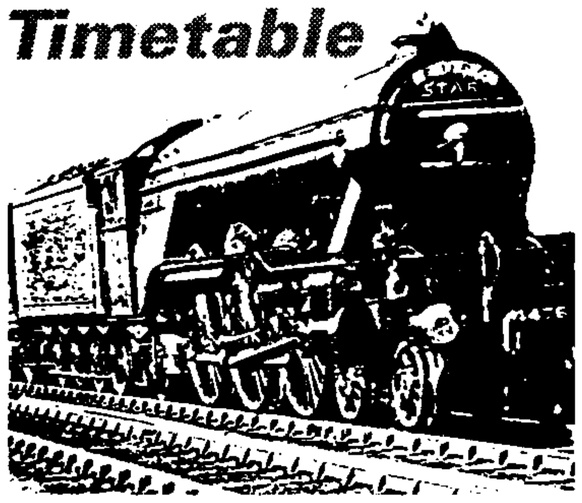
OR

Questions-In-The-House Wine (£3,000 extra)

— ✻ —

(Bill to M. Fayed, copy to P. Preston, The Grauniad)

EuroStar Timetable



Get To The Continent Quicker Than You Dreamed Possible!

Waterloo-Paris

09.15 Depart Waterloo.

09.20 Enjoy three hours "dwell-time" at the new Waterloo "Euro-Shopping Experience" while waiting for train to be mended. Visit Le Tie-Rack, Le Sock-Shop et Le Burger-King.

12.15 Embus for Heathrow *(no surcharge).*

13.00 Bus held up by hole in ground outside Terminal 3.

14.00 Re-Embus for Gatwick.

15.30 Arrive Gatwick.

16.12 Take train back to Waterloo.

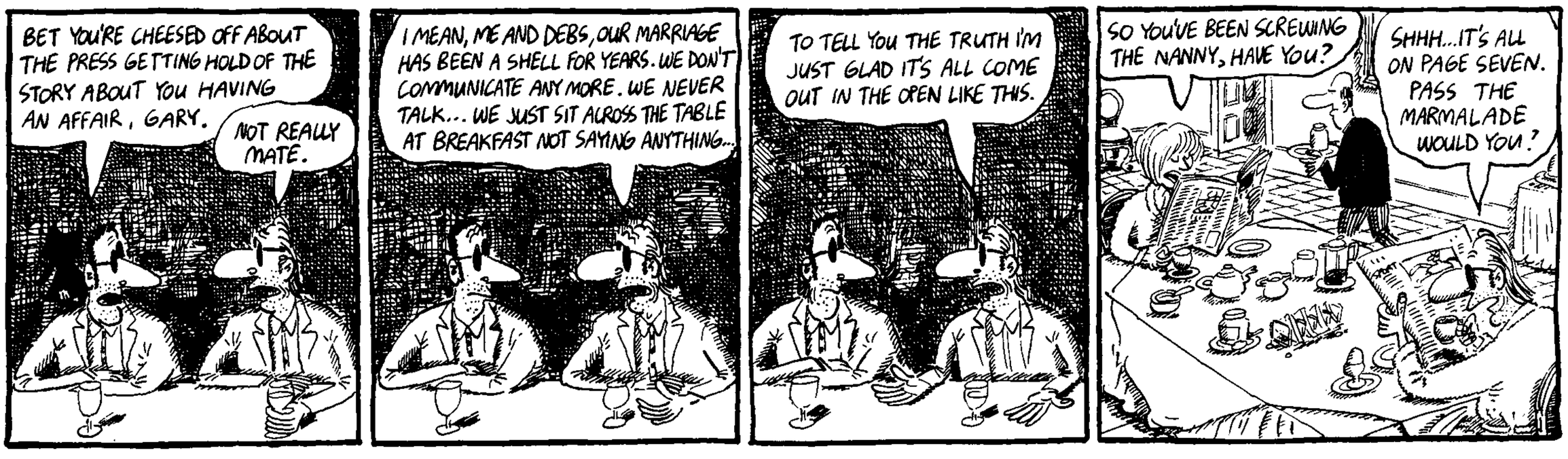
17.35 Arrive Waterloo and go home, having given up stupid idea of going to France.

eurostar

It's Quicker To Swim

Great Bores Of Today.

"... it's really fantastic I mean we were in hysterics weren't we darling? there's this scene where we see these two guys go out to kill these men and they shoot the wrong man actually they blow his head off with these huge Magnums there's blood all over the place and one of the killers has bits of brain on his ear the cinema was in fits people laughing and jumping up and down in another really strange bit they've got this man locked up in a dungeon and he's in S&M gear it turns out that the policeman likes buggering black men and all the time these killers are talking about the cost of hamburgers in Paris and how to get the best foot massage there are all these references to other films you must see it the guy is so hip and he really talks our language David was sick in the car on the way home..."


BET YOU'RE CHEESED OFF ABOUT THE PRESS GETTING HOLD OF THE STORY ABOUT YOU HAVING AN AFFAIR, GARY.
NOT REALLY MATE.
I MEAN, ME AND DEBS, OUR MARRIAGE HAS BEEN A SHELL FOR YEARS. WE DON'T COMMUNICATE ANY MORE. WE NEVER TALK... WE JUST SIT ACROSS THE TABLE AT BREAKFAST NOT SAYING ANYTHING...
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH I'M JUST GLAD IT'S ALL COME OUT IN THE OPEN LIKE THIS.
SO YOU'VE BEEN SCREWING THE NANNY, HAVE YOU?
SHHH...IT'S ALL ON PAGE SEVEN. PASS THE MARMALADE WOULD YOU?

DIARY

Germaine Greer: On this page we're going to discuss openly for the first time some truly important questions. Is the Englishman's word still his bond? Is this country going to the dogs? What's happening to us all? Whose life is it anyway? Will you still love me tomorrow? Do you know the way to San Jose? And how much is that doggy in the window, woof woof? Any thoughts, Ann?

Ann Leslie: On the question of the doggy in the window, quite frankly it's a well-known fact that the vast majority of ordinary decent people couldn't give a damn about how much the doggy is, quite frankly, or that it's a doggy at all, and they'd much rather it stayed cooped up in the bloody window, quite frankly, because I've spoken to the vast majority of ordinary decent people and they're bored with the whole thing, thank you very much, quite frankly.

Germaine Greer: Any miserable comments to make at this juncture, Token Sad Woman?

Token Sad Woman: I disagree. I think basically the real problem is that men should be responsive to the needs of women and second basically men should spend less time fussing about what women need and finally it really gets up my nose the way men are always to-ing and fro-ing between living their own lives and trying to live ours. So I agree. And that makes me pretty sad, basically.

Janet Street-Porter: I must say I find it really urgghh when, like, someone goes urgghh and it really makes you feel urgghh. And most of my close friends feel the same, like, urgghh. And while we're on the subject could I just mention two words, since we're all adults: cock and fart?

(ROARS OF LAUGHTER)

Suzanne Moore: Can I just say that men are only good for two things: sex and DIY!

Germaine Greer: Isn't the real problem that everyone is much older these days? I mean, I remember in the sixties, everyone was twenty or so, but now it seems to me that most people are in their fifties with their own chat shows. That means everyone's thirty years older than they were then, and that's kinda frightening, don't you think, Token Twenty-Year-Old?

Token Twenty-Year-Old: Like, okay, I mean, kind of, y'know, like he said, okay, like, y'know,

THE LAST WORD TEAM

let's have it off, right, like and well, it kind of, y'know, really sort of, I mean, well, so I said, okay, right, ***let's have it off***, like, y'know.

Suzanne Moore: To my mind, men are only good for two things: sex and DIY!!

Germaine Greer: As we approach the millennium, are we experiencing a major sea-change of perception? Are we dead to all sense of honour, truth, loyalty? Have we forgotten the meaning of words like community and commitment and cohesion? In the year 2525, if man is still alive, if woman can survive, what may they find?

Ann Leslie: I read somewhere that apparently there's this tribe in — I don't know — somewhere like Africa or India or South America, anyway, there's this Arab tribe, probably in China or somewhere, where the women are all happy, and apparently, or so these very distinguished anthropologists say, they really don't like being happy at all — it makes them very, very sad. And that's an absolute fact.

Janet Street-Porter: I'm sorry, but I find that really urgghh, like men are really much smarter than we give them credit for. 'Cept for some of them, who are really much more stupid.

Suzanne Moore: Actually, now I come to think of it, men are only good for two things: sex and DIY!!!

Token Sad Woman: A man I used to know once invited me out to dinner in a smart restaurant. I felt just terrible about it. Before the meal came, he started asking me all sorts of questions, really awful questions like "what would you like to drink?" and "how are you?". So as you can imagine I felt pretty ghastly. Then the waiter — who was also a man — came up, and said something like, "Are you ready to order?". And of course I felt dreadful. And then we had our meal, talked a bit, and left the smart restaurant. I don't know how I coped, but somehow I did. I hope to God I'll never go through an experience like that again, never ever, but my God it taught me a lesson about men.

Token Twenty-Year-Old: Right. Like, I mean, y'know, like if they say ***have it off*** you either, right, y'know, I mean, yeah, ***have it off***, or, like, you don't, y'know, ***have it off***, it's kind of up to you whether you ***have it off*** or not. Or something, like, it's kind of, y'know.

Germaine Greer: Absolutely. We know from statistics that something has happened. Something truly cataclysmic has happened to our society, and everyone agrees on that. But what is it? Nobody seems to know. And that's what perturbs me, it really does. We've got to start asking some important questions. What are we doing to each other? Who am I? What in God's name are we doing here? Where are we exactly? Where did you put the potato peeler? And would you like to ride in my beautiful, my beautiful balloon? Janet, any controversial thoughts?

Janet Street-Porter: Like, there's this bloke I know who sometimes takes off his trousers, right, and then his pants…

(ROARS OF LAUGHTER)

Janet Street-Porter: And underneath it all he has this WILLY!!

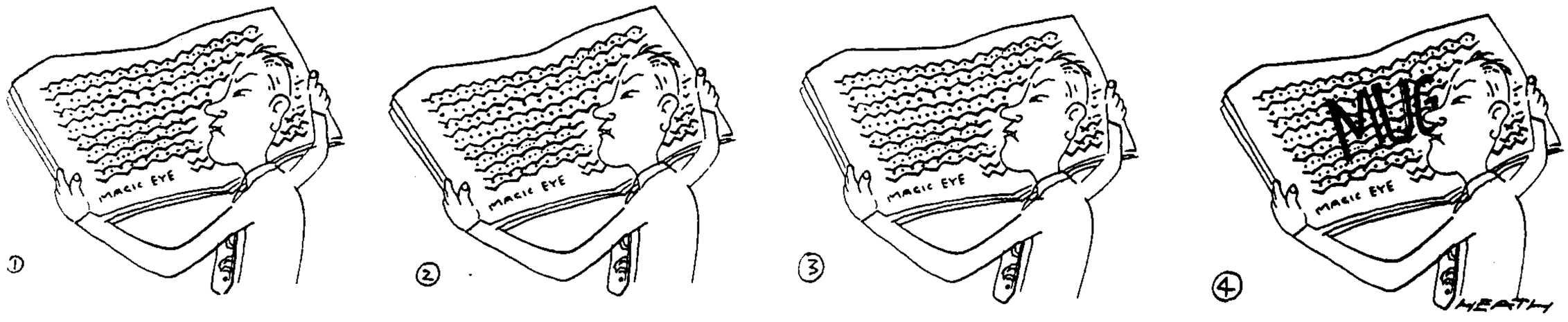
(MORE ROARS OF LAUGHTER)

Token Sad Woman: I had this friend once.

Suzanne Moore: Stop me if I've said this already, but I think men are only good for two things: sex and DIY!!!!

Ann Leslie: Apparently there's this tribe in Africa —

Germaine Greer: I'm going to have to stop you there, Ann. Next week, I ask my guests: "What are we all up to?" "Why are we all here?" "What is it all for?" And the question on everyone's lips: "Why can't anyone stop us?"



Literary Review

Holy smokescreen

Crossing The Threshold of Hope
His Holiness John Paul II
(Cape, £9.99)

IS THE pope a Catholic? You can never be sure, can you? There must be at least a couple of million people out there who want to find out, since that's how many copies of this little treasure have been sold so far around the world.

In Britain, however, the pope's only the number two bestseller, just behind Alan Bennett — quite a religious thinker too in his way, of course. What Christ went through was nothing to what our Alan suffered, growing up in Leeds. A typical meditation on the subject from the blessed St Alan: "When I was a boy and read of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples, I thought of their feet as like my own in 1943, sweating in grey Utility socks and encased in heavy black shoes with stuck-on rubber soles. Consequently I regarded Jesus's gesture as far more self-sacrificing, even heroic than it actually was. After twelve pairs of such feet, I thought, the Crucifixion would have been a pushover." Oh aye.

His Holiness John Paul II has nothing quite so moving or well-phrased in his slim volume, unfortunately. In format *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* is seductive enough: a neat little package with a white and gold wrapper concealing rich purple underwear. The content, however, is boring beyond belief. As it were.

According to the publicity it's a revolutionary event: the first ever interview with a real live pope, as exciting as seeing the first yeti in captivity. A few pages reveal, however, that this is no interview at all, being constructed instead on the age-old Catholic model of the catechism, in which the grovelling postulant is not only given all the answers to memorise but has all the questions dictated to him too.

A hack called Vittorio Messori submitted 20 obvious queries to the pope in 1993. Earlier this year he received written replies, now faithfully reproduced. He behaves as though this makes popeye a regular partygoer. "The fact that he had taken a journalist so seriously is yet more proof — if there were ever a need — of his humility, of his generous availability to hear our voices, those of the common 'Christians on the street'," he gushes pathetically.

Any interviewer who addresses his subject as "Your Holiness" is unlikely to give his interviewee too rough a ride, but Messori's self-abasement knows no limits. He is a classic stooge, abjectly thanking the pope for his replies while never noticing that the pope has not answered the question he has been asked.

But then the very presentation of this book as a conversation is an imposture, for what dialogue can there be with the pope? After all, he speaks for the church which, on certain issues, has declared itself to be infallible. There's no arguing with that.

It is only occasionally, when he offers a personal anecdote, that the pope even deigns to use the first person rather than the third. Laughably, Messori has devotedly preserved all the pope's wild underlinings, so that the text reveals its insistent didacticism at a glance. He replies to most questions by simply citing the church's official statements, or merely alluding to them as "revealed truths". Asked whether or not eternal life exists, he begins: "Please open the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. *Lumen Gentium*, to chapter 7..." Thanks, bud.

When Messori asks a question about Vatican II, saying "allow me to play, although respectfully, the gadfly", the pope says stiffly: "My opinion is based on faith in the Holy Spirit who guides the Church, and also from careful observation of the facts." Not allowed, then.

On a larger scale, this is how all dissent is treated. There's a good deal of waffle about "ecumenism". To him, it means simply getting everybody else to see that the Catholic church is right. "The *Petrine ministry* is also a *ministry of unity*, which is carried out in the field of ecumenism," as he grandly explains it. There is also a superbly patronising survey of other religions too, with Muslims praised for praying a lot, the Jews said to be nearest the truth, and Buddhists rebuked for their negative attitude.

Throughout, the pope indulges in asinine cultural namedropping, like a pious Bryan Appleyard. He repeatedly blames Descartes for the excesses of his great enemy "rationalism", but the account he gives of Descartes is a travesty. Although he is fluent enough in the expression of his own theology, once he steps outside it he resembles nothing so much as one of the second rate journalists he despises. It is strictly preaching to the converted.

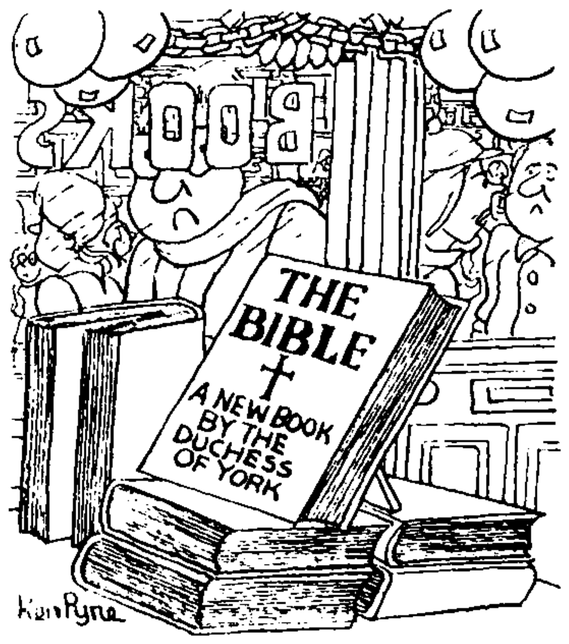
There are a few small glimpses of the man to be had from this otherwise pointless exercise. He remains thoroughly Polish, the only remotely personal note coming when he recalls his life there. He evidently knows nothing about any woman since the Blessed Virgin Mary. "I think a certain *contemporary feminism* finds its roots in the absence of true respect for woman," he says, as if he knew. Like any other potentate, he thinks his own unrepresentative experiences are highly significant. Muslims are not as bad as some people think because when the pope has visited Africa and Asia he has been "welcomed with great hospitality", don't you know.

More disturbingly this pope evidently now believes that the assassination attempt he survived in 1981 was nothing less than a direct message from God that he must lead the world into the next millennium, fulfilling the secret prophecies given in the apparition at Fatima.

In the most interesting and spooky passage in the book, he says: "At first I did not pay attention to the fact that the assassination attempt had occurred on the exact anniversary of the day Mary appeared to the three children at Fatima in Portugal and spoke to them the words that now, at the end of this century, seem to be close to their fulfilment.

"With this event, didn't Christ perhaps say, once again, 'Be not afraid'? Didn't he repeat this Easter exhortation to the Pope, to the Church, and, indirectly, to the entire human family?"

Maybe, maybe not, eh? But then that's just what the pope doesn't allow you to say. Silly *man*.



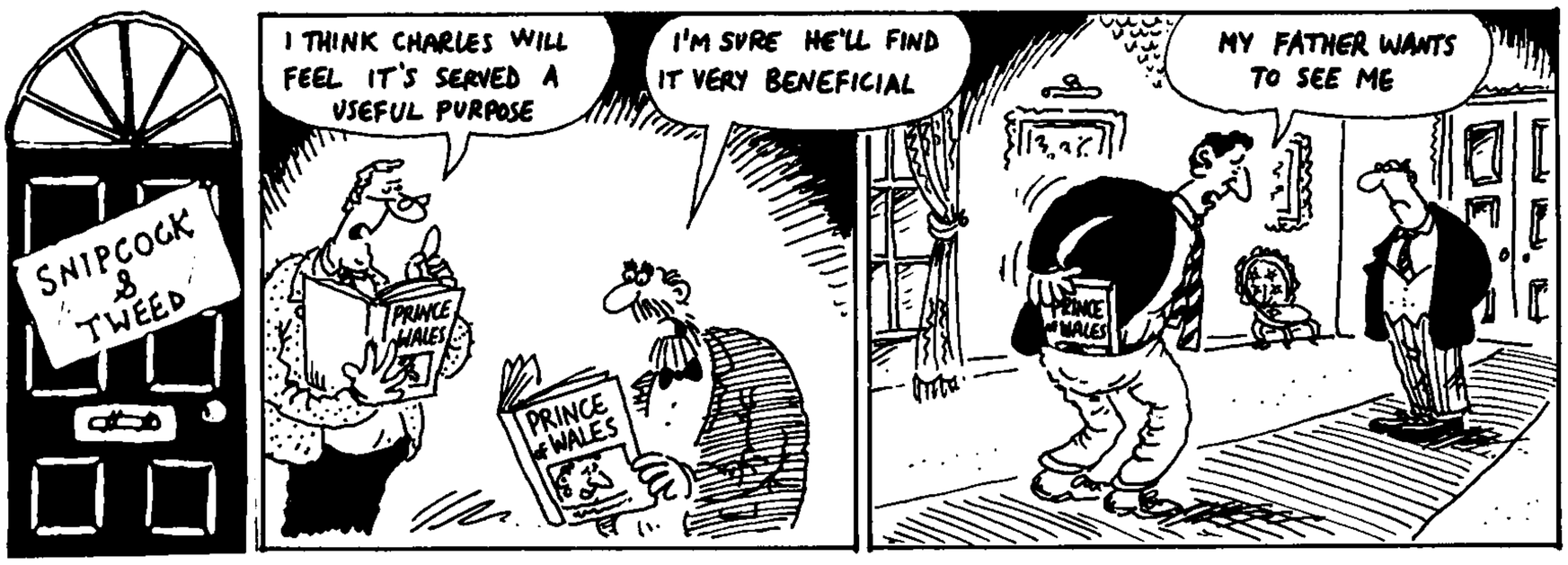
NOTICES

BOROUGH OF WEST DEVON TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
Notice is hereby given of the following application(s):-
CONVERSATION AREA CONSENT

Okehampton Times

☐ **How to Satisfy a Woman Every Time:** *Over 1.3 million copies sold in America alone, we've imported just a few copies, which are reserved for this sale on a 'first-come-first-served' basis.*

Carnell plc advertisement


SNIPCOCK & TWEED
I THINK CHARLES WILL FEEL IT'S SERVED A USEFUL PURPOSE
I'M SURE HE'LL FIND IT VERY BENEFICIAL
PRINCE of WALES
MY FATHER WANTS TO SEE ME

footnotes

MORE SLEAZE FROM THE GULF...

THE COMMONS TOUCH

MORE documents reach the *Eye* concerning Kuwaiti-backed payments to important people — especially Conservative MPs. They hail from the Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies, a Kuwaiti-backed lobbying outfit which sometimes quarrels with the Arab League (see *Eye* 850).

The documents include a schedule of "expenses" from 1 October 1993 to 12 May 1994 approved by the centre's chairman, Dr Omar Al-Hassan. This shows payments of £6,000 to William Powell; and £2,000 to Tony Marlow. There is also a reference to £1,900 spent on a "seminar on shura council" at the House of Commons on 22 November last year.

Tony Marlow is the Tory MP for Northampton North who declares in the Commons register of members' interests an "occasional consultancy" with the Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies. And is William Powell the doughty Tory MP for Corby who shows a strong interest in the Middle East and who declares an interest in four companies, and two recent trips, one to Egypt in October last year and one to Tunisia in January – but not the GCSS?

The documents show that spending continued this year. There is a copy of two GCSS cheques for £500 payable to William Powell on 15 June and 4 July, and copies of three £200 cheques to Mr Marlow in May, June and July. Even more intriguing is the bill for a lunch at the Commons on 28 May this year in honour of the former general secretary of the GCSS. The lunch was held in Dining Room D. There were 16 people scoffing there, at £24.76 each, plus drinks which cost £61. The bill came to £577.38. As is the custom in the House, it was paid by the host, Tony Marlow MP, who appears to have been repaid on 21 June with a GCSS cheque for just the right amount.

WILLIAM POWELL

TONY MARLOW

Prodigious efforts by the *Eye* by telephone, fax and letter to contact Mr Marlow or Mr Powell MP, came to nought.

The *Eye* did, however, have a conversation with Dr Omar Al Hassan, the meat of which went as follows:

Q: We've been sent some documents which suggest that you regularly pay money to Mr Powell and Mr Marlow.

A: You can ask them.

Q: I can ask them, but I can also ask you, I think.

A: You can ask them, please.

Q: Will you not answer any questions in relation to these matters?

A: Not at all.

Q: Why is that exactly?

A: What you want from us — you can let me know in writing.

Q: I'll fax you if you like.

A: Yes, you can really send a fax.

Q: The documents suggest regular payments and a payment for a lunch in the House of Commons for the former general secretary of GCSS.

A: If you know we pay Tony Marlow, why are you asking really?

It's in the register of interests.

Q: Mr Powell doesn't register any such interest.

A: You can ask him, I am busy please.

Q: Well, I'll send you a fax.

A: No, don't fax me. Goodbye.

PS. The Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies hosted a glittering lunch at London's Inter-Continental Hotel in the summer. The main guest speaker was John Major.

THORN IN THE FLESH

■ A RECENT report from the Save the Children Fund, one of whose richest corporate sponsors is Thorn EMI, made a strong call for "a complete ban on the use and transfer of anti-personnel mines".

The SCF report should perhaps be read in tandem with *Land Mines — A Deadly Legacy*, a report produced last year by the Arms Project of Human Rights Watch. It stated: "Thorn EMI actively marketed its Ranger scatterable anti-personnel mines for overseas customers in the 1980s and sold more than one million units to at least four unspecified nations.

"Lt Col P.R. Courtney-Green of Britain's Royal Military College describes the Ranger as a classic example of a mine deliberately designed to have 'a limited effect for sinister reasons because a wounded soldier will be a noisier and more morale-sapping distraction for his comrades than a dead soldier'."

Swimming Poole

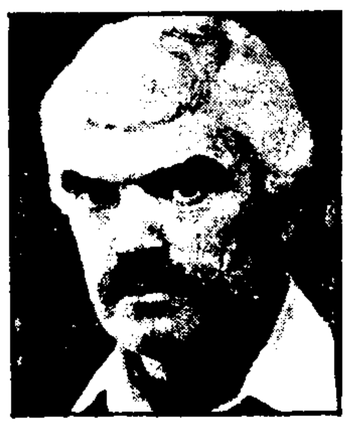
■ IT'S TOUGH for youngsters looking for a job in journalism nowadays, so here's a success story to cheer them up.

Oliver Poole, 22, who left Oxford in the summer, is gaining valuable work experience as a reporter on the *Yorkshire Evening Post* in Leeds. Mr Poole can claim a remarkable family double. He is the grandson of one former Tory party chairman, Lord Poole, and stepson of another, Sir Norman Fowler.

Sir Norman, who called for a full-scale inquiry into sleaze shortly before his friend John Major set one up, is the chairman of Midland Independent Newspapers, a group which includes the *Birmingham Post* It would obviously have been inappropriate for young Oliver to start his journalistic career on a newspaper owned by his stepfather's group. But, as good fortune would have it, Chris Oakley, chief executive of Midland Independent Newspapers used to work at the *Yorkshire Post* He had a word in the ear of Gerry Holbrook, chief executive of the group which owns the *Post.* Hey presto! — Oliver got a job.

There's no nonsense either about "work experience" youngsters being taken on for nothing — a widespread practice which would be deplored by Sir Norman, a former secretary of state for employment. Oliver gets £100 a week. He tells friends he will apply next year for one of the much sought after postgraduate journalist's courses. Will he try the prestigious course at the City University, London, which is run by Linda Christmas, first wife of Sir Norman Fowler?

It's a fair cop



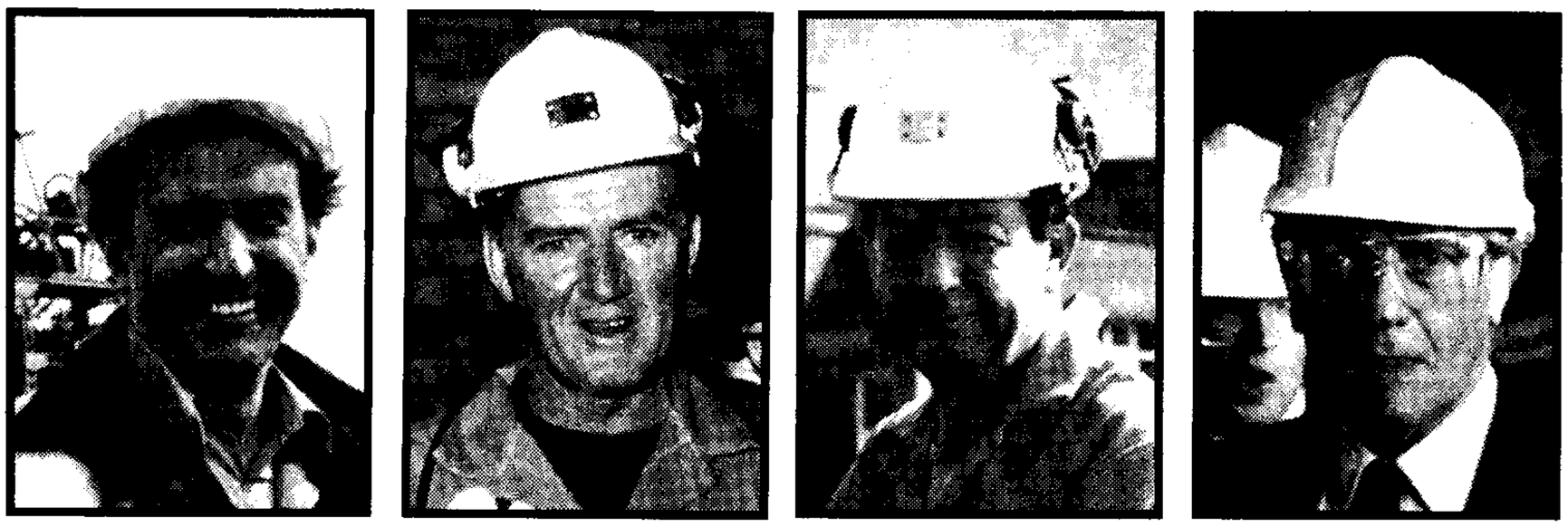
■ AFTER his arrest by Birmingham crime squad officers, George Tomkins spent 526 days in prison for an armed robbery he didn't commit.

Throughout his imprisonment he suffered from dreadful body sores, but was refused permission for treatment in hospital. From the outset he told officers he was in Liverpool at the time of the robbery, which was in Leamington. His probation officer could prove it. But Mr Tomkins was still held in custody on the basis of a single witness identifying him in a "confrontation". 17 months later he was acquitted by a unanimous jury at Birmingham crown court in November 1984.

Mr Tomkins thinks he was framed, and for 10 years has been trying to prove it. In 1992, after an investigation by West Yorkshire police, papers on his case were sent to the director of public prosecutions, who decided there was "insufficient evidence" to prosecute.

George Tomkins took out a private prosecution. On 29 September, Birmingham stipendiary magistrate Miles McColl decided that there was a case to answer against four police officers involved in the case. Two of them have since retired — former Det Supt Stan Beechey, who rose to be deputy head of the West Midlands serious crimes squad and former Det Insp Terence Mills. Two are still serving — Det Sgt John Barker and Det Chief Insp Ernie Robinson.

All four were committed for trial at Birmingham crown court on charges of conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.



THE SEAMY SIDE: HUNT, PARKINSON, WAKEHAM AND HESELTINE

THEY'RE THE PITS!

SO GRATEFUL was the government to the Union of Democratic Mineworkers for its help in breaking the miners' strike of 1984-85 that it promised to send a minister every year to address the UDM conference. The UDM was delighted.

In 1986 the minister was David Hunt, who ended his speech with a ringing declaration: "Mr President, in conclusion, I make it absolutely clear that this government is committed to a secure coal industry that will provide lasting and well-paid jobs for its employees." The conference dissolved in applause and gave Mr Hunt a gold UDM badge.

In 1987 the minister was Cecil Parkinson, newly-appointed secretary of state for energy. He emphasised "the debt the country owes to the UDM". He was able to soothe delegates' fears about privatisation. "I can state categorically," he said, "that ... there are no plans in the pipeline for the privatisation of coal at this moment. There are no plans, full stop."The conference dissolved in applause and gave Mr Parkinson a bowl with the UDM badge on it.

In 1988 the minister was Michael Spicer. He said: "We do not intend to privatise the industry," adding, sotto voce, "before the next election." The government, he concluded, "stands shoulder to shoulder with this union." The conference dissolved in applause and gave Mr Spicer a whisky decanter with the UDM badge on it.

In 1989 the minister was Cecil Parkinson again. He triumphantly announced what he had declared two years previously he had no plans for... er, coal privatisation. But he promised: "At a minimum we are determined that everybody working in the industry will have the opportunity to become at least part-owners." The conference dissolved in applause and gave Mr Parkinson a silver tray with his portrait embossed on it.

In 1990 the minister was Tony Baldry. "I would like," he said, "to pay tribute to all in the industry for the part you have played in implementing the many approaches to improving productivity that have been so successfully put into practice." The conference dissolved in applause and gave Mr Baldry a table lamp.

In 1991 the minister was John Wakeham, secretary of state for energy. He said the UDM "had struck a historic blow for democratic trade unionism". He was, he said, "very confident about the future of the industry" under private ownership, and suggested that the UDM miners themselves might soon own their own pits. "The future owners of the industry," he said, "will I hope include many people present in the hall." The conference dissolved in applause and gave Mr Wakeham a flower bowl.

In 1992 the minister was Michael Heseltine, president of the board of trade. "I have," he trumpeted, "enormous admiration for the way in which the coal industry has succeeded in transforming its performance." Much of this, he said, was due to the UDM. "We promised in our manifesto" he bellowed "that one element of the privatisation to which we are committed is to sell British Coal in a way that enables the workers in the industry to enjoy a stake in the future." The conference dissolved in applause and gave Mr Heseltine a rose bowl.

Four months later the same Mr Heseltine announced drastic pit closures, which have devastated the Nottinghamshire coal field and reduced the Union of Democratic Mineworkers to a rump. Desperately, the UDM leaders clung to the Heseltine pledge that they would get a stake in the few pits which were left. They teamed up with a private company and bid for what was left of the Notts pits.

The same Mr Heseltine has decided that the Notts pits (and pretty well all the other pits as well) will be knocked down to a company owned by an earth mover and opencast mining director called Richard Budge. He is the only one who will have the "stake" in the industry which was promised so effusively to the UDM by Mr Heseltine and others.

The UDM and its leaders, effectively wiped out, are devastated. On the other hand Mr Hunt has been promoted to the cabinet as the prime minister's right hand man; Mr Parkinson is now Lord Parkinson; Mr Baldry has been promoted to the foreign office; Mr Spicer is now chairman of the Association of Independent Power Producers; Mr Wakeham is Lord Wakeham; and Mr Heseltine, like all the rest of them, is still making speeches and promises of which no one in the country believes a single word.

BUDGE FUDGE

■ RICHARD BUDGE is an expert at obtaining public money for his private companies. A good example is Clipstone colliery, Notts, which closed last year and was reopened by Mr Budge's company RJB Mining earlier this year. Budge has taken on 200 miners, most of whom had previously worked at Clipstone.

At once he negotiated a contract with the North Nottinghamshire Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) which gave his company £1,000 of 'training support money' for every single miner he reemployed — even though almost all those miners were fully trained.

To seal the bargain, on the very day the money was handed over, a new director joined the North Notts TEC — one Richard Budge.

North Notts Tec is generous with public money for companies associated with its directors. Five such companies connected to Messrs H Baggeley, P. Cox, R. Hextall, I. Linney and P Moore (all TEC directors) got £86,000 taxpayers' money in "business support". The "training support" payment to R.J. Budge was £150,000 in 1993-94 and £150,000 in 1994-95.

The *Eye* asked the TEC if Mr Budge's position on the board of the TEC which dished him out £300,000 of public money might lead to a conflict of interest?

Hold your breath for the reply: "All our directors are totally committed to improving the economy of North Nottinghamshire and take seriously the training and development of their workforce."

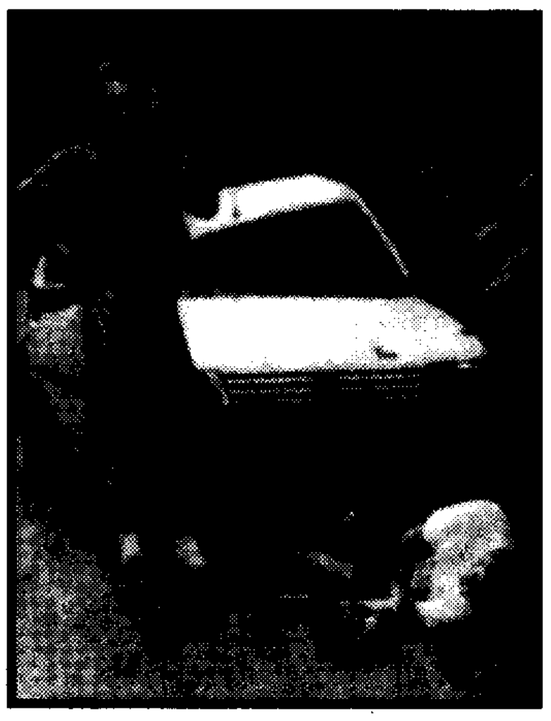
She was only the sheriff's daughter ...

■ MARKETING manager Stephen Wallace, 36, an experienced cyclist, was lucky to escape without serious injury when he cycled round a corner of a single-track Derbyshire road and smashed into an oncoming car.

Apart from the driver of the car, Caroline Turner, 19, there was no witness to the accident except Stephen's fellow cyclist who was following behind him. Mr Wallace and Miss Turner apologised to each other and exchanged insurance documents. Mr Wallace's bike was completely smashed. He went home in an ambulance and assumed that was the end of the matter.

To his astonishment, however, Derbyshire police investigated the incident with the greatest possible care. Mr Wallace was prosecuted for "reckless cycling". During a long case in front of Buxton magistrates in September, the prosecution contended that Mr Wallace was on the wrong side of the road and was going too fast. The evidence for this was the word of the driver's grandfather (who was not on the scene) and the driver herself who admitted that the accident happened in a split second and she didn't see the moment of impact.

Mr Wallace and his fellow cyclist, contended that the incident was a simple accident and that if anyone was going too fast the driver was. He was convicted and fined £100 plus £200 costs.



AFTER THE CRASH: Stephen Wallace on the ground

Stephen Wallace is very upset by the verdict. But he is a loyal citizen and a democrat, so he has discounted any suggestion that the prosecution or the verdict could have had anything to do with the fact that Miss Turner is the daughter of Rupert Turner, the High Sheriff of Derbyshire.

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 071 287 3183

In the City

THERE is something revolting about watching the sanctimonious *Guardian* editor Peter Preston dancing to the tune of the phoney pharaoh Mohamed Fayed. No doubt ex-civil servant Sarah Tisdall wishes that 10 years ago he and the *Guardian* had been prepared to go so far — forging a letter from Jonathan Aitken's office — to protect an informant, rather than handing her over to be imprisoned for breaching the official secrets act.

Truth is where you find it; but the price for exposing corruption and MPs' greed should not be defending a proven liar who misled the government and regulators about his wealth and background. The *Guardian* may yet come to learn the lesson they are helping to teach the Tories about dogs and fleas.

For long before the damning department of trade and industry report on Fayed was "leaked" in 1989 there was more than enough known about the phoney pharaoh to ensure any sensible politician erected a cordon sanitaire. But Fayed knew from his years of hustling in the Middle East how to infiltrate the Tory government: find out what ministers and MPs wanted and give it to them. The answer was cheques big and small plus generous hospitality. Those who so eagerly accepted the Fayed shilling never contemplated their paymaster turning on them when he did not get what he wanted. But he had done it before.

During the sixties Fayed manipulated his way into the confidence of Haiti's "Papa Doc" Duvalier in order to obtain oil and harbour concessions. He fled the country having ripped off the old tyrant. Fayed next appeared as the "bag man" for Dubai fixer Mahdi Al-Tajir, collecting commissions and taking care of business. Fayed was well known to certain London madams who provided girls for partying.

When later Fayed and Mahdi fell out, Fayed did to him what he is now doing to the Tories. He produced chapter and verse of pay-offs that the then United Arab Emirates ambassador to Britain had received. He was also prepared to go to extraordinary lengths to discredit Mahdi, falsely accusing him of involvement in drug trafficking and sexual deviancy with everyone short of a camel.

Those who met Fayed would also have had little doubt about the type of man he is. Once the thin veneer of unctuous civility is dropped, every sentence, especially when it comes to his opponents, is an F-word other than F-ayed, or similar non-*Guardian* language. His style is to shower those he wishes to impress or use with gifts, ratcheting up the value to see when they cry stop. Most never did (so much so that even Fayed complained about their greed) and could therefore never refuse his requests.

Neil Hamilton (who with fellow victim Tim Smith continued to do Fayed's bidding after the DTI's findings were known) was preceded by a long list of senior journalists and other MPs on Ritz freebies. Like Hamilton, they were prepared to take Fayed for every penny they could. They — with Jonathan Aitken — will no doubt be reassured to learn that not only does Fayed keep the receipts but it is claimed he arranged for rooms to be bugged enabling the recording of telephone calls and if necessary video taping.

Then there is the Harrods hamper list. Every year hampers worth from under £100 up to £1,000 winged their way to MPs, senior police officers and journalists. Few were ever returned and for MPs even fewer recorded in the register of MPs interests. Expensive diaries were another regular distribution.

Fayed assiduously courted friends in high places during the nine year Harrods war with Lonrho. Armed with his bountiful cheque book and an endless supply of Harrods gift vouchers and goodies he made connections with everyone he could reach from the queen and Mrs Thatcher on down through minor royalty, peers, ministers, MPs, newspaper proprietors (Lord Rothermere, whose *Daily Mail* is a tenant, was and remains a loyal fan) and editors. He talked of a number of "friendly MPs" who were never to be attacked by his paid propagandists such as pamphleteer Francesca Pollard, lawyer Royston Webb and PR flak Michael Cole. These included trade secretaries Norman Tebbit, Leon Brittan and Nicholas Ridley.

One minister he never has had a kind or truthful word for, however, is Michael Howard, a junior trade minister at the time the DTI investigation was launched in 1987. For years afterwards Fayed encouraged totally groundless and malicious rumours that Howard had been paid off by Lonrho's "Tiny" Rowland to turn the DTI inspectors loose. His underlings whispered about up to £5 million being paid. No evidence was produced because there wasn't any. Instead, dark insinuations were made about Howard being related (they are second cousins) to longtime Rowland associate Harry Landy.

The truth was that the Thatcher government launched the investigation to keep Rowland quiet ahead of the 1987 election. They did not want him relentlessly raising questions about Fayed's Tory links (Fayed now admits he gave the Tories £250,000) and the business activities of Denis and Mark Thatcher.

Now that Fayed is seeking revenge for being unable to cancel out the DTI's verdict on him as a conman, he has once again returned to attack Howard with a new smear. This is the equally false accusation that the minister passed to Rowland a copy of the DTI report which the *Observer* duly published. This absurd and malicious fabrication — never made previously by Fayed — is accompanied once again by suggestions that Howard was paid £500,000, £1 million, £1.5 million (take your pick) in a Swiss bank account by — yes, you've guessed — Harry Landy. Both Landy and Rowland deny doing any such thing or telling Fayed that they did.

Only a man like Mohamed Fayed — who will believe anything about his enemies and do whatever is necessary to convince others of the truth of that belief — could not only invent but disseminate such a smear. Howard had no access to the report being employment minister at the time. Furthermore, until last month Fayed himself had for years maintained that a fraud squad detective not a government minister was bribed to hand over a copy of the report. A view which is still held by many of those with knowledge of the subsequent "leak" investigation.

But for Fayed fact and fiction are equal weapons in his war on the Tories who grossly underestimated their benefactor, seeing him as a soft touch to be exploited for personal or party ends. Before his campaign is over many of the Tory friends of Fayed, some still in government, are going to learn that lunches with the phoney pharaoh can be extremely costly.

WORRIED Tories may also need to brace themselves for further embarrassment owing to the legal problems of three other past benefactors.

Terry Venables' generous backer Ted Ball of Landhurst Leasing is still said to be the target of an ever longer running Serious Fraud Office investigation, although just what charges will be brought over Landhurst's collapse remains to be seen. Ball is said to have been a source of donations to the Tories through contacts with former party treasurer Lord Beaverbrook.

Another SFO target is Muhammad Naviede, who faces fraud charges following the 1991 collapse of his trade finance group Arrows. Like Ball he used the charity route of the upwardly mobile to meet the right people. Naviede has also been linked to Tory party donations.

Then there is the little family squabble between Lord Palumbo and his children in the civil courts. This has already revealed that Palumbo allegedly paid £263,000 from trust funds to the Tory party while a grateful Tory government has not only assisted his controversial development plans for the City but also given him a peerage.

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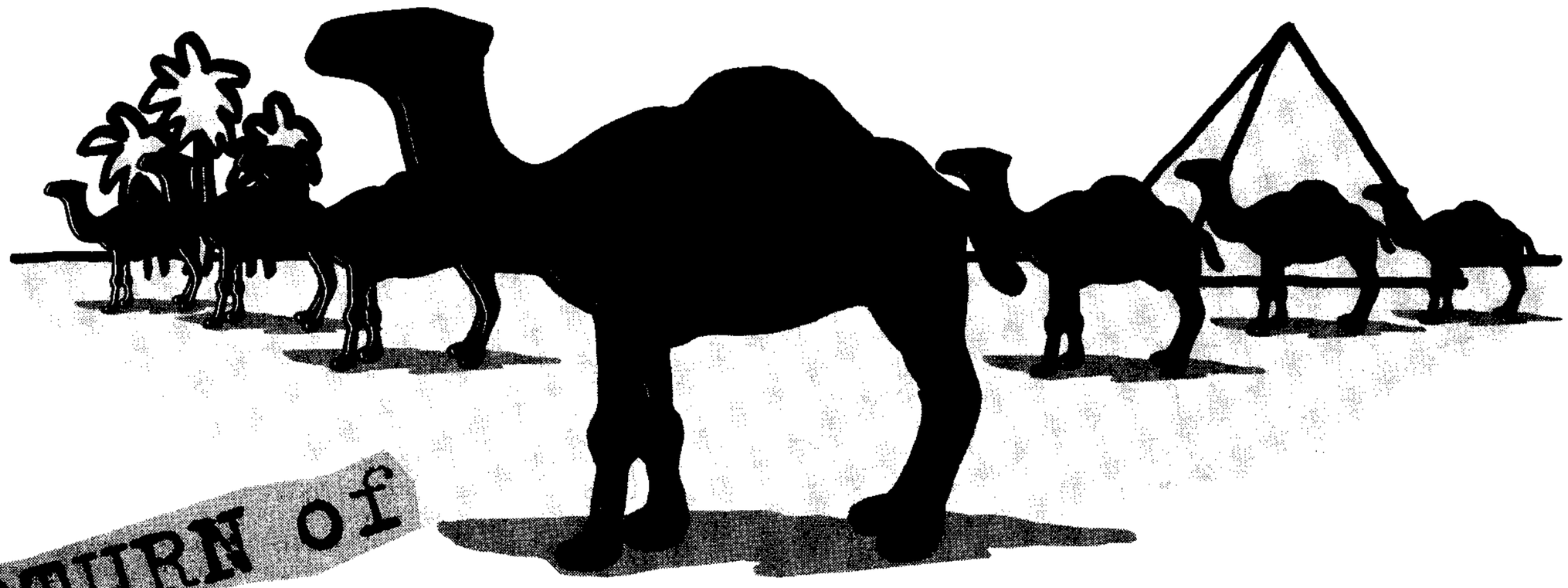

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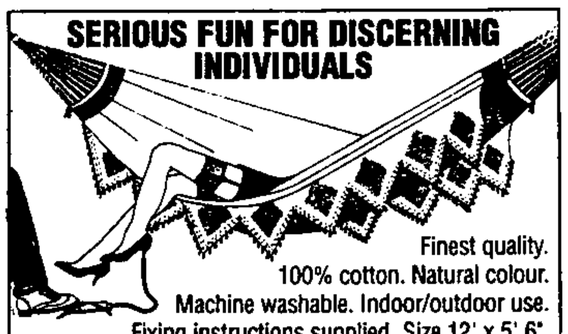

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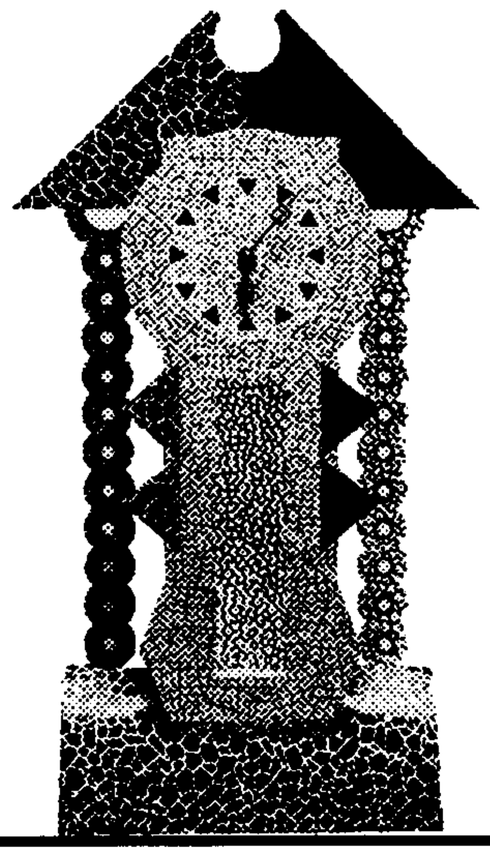

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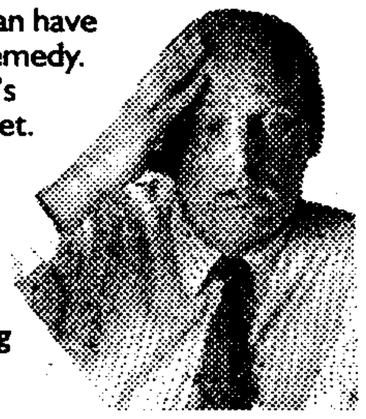

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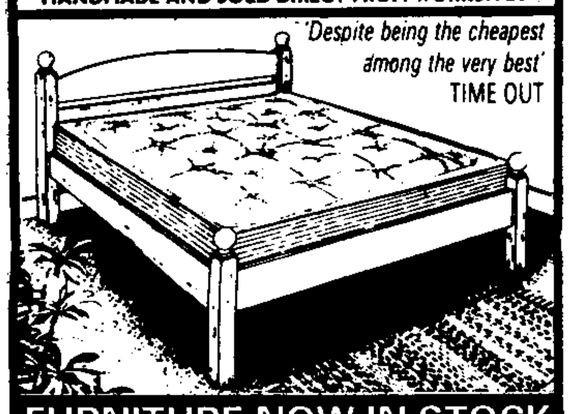

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William Langley, Sunday Times

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SPEECH WRITING by Mitch Murray. See Page 30.

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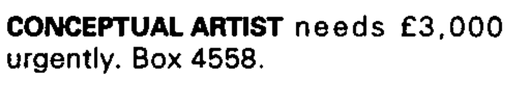

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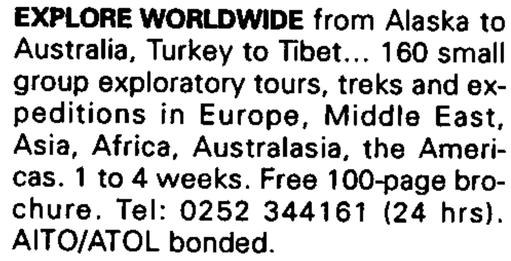

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UNIVERSITY LECTURER, early 40s, outgoing, relaxed, non-demanding, northern based, often in London for tedious conferences, seeks female companion for fulfilling relationship. Interested in conversation, theatre, art. Discreet and grateful. Response assured, so please do write. Box 4358.

(OCCASIONALLY) GIRLISH BOY, (36) seeks (somewhat) boyish girl (any age) for exploration in diversity, food, travel, sex, entertainment, adventure. Box 4458.

MALE WRITER, 37, tall dark and handsome, seeks attractive female for collaboration on short story; erotic adventure. My pen is poised, awaiting your stimulating dialogue. Box 4658.

TALL, ATTRACTIVE MAN, 30, seeks bored adventurous woman for afternoon/eve frolics. E. Anglia, London. Box 4758.

AN ALRIGHT CREATIVE male human. Not mad, bad, sad or alcoholic. Not unattractive, 44, 5'6", slim. Seeking unavenging angel, London/Bristol. Box 4858.

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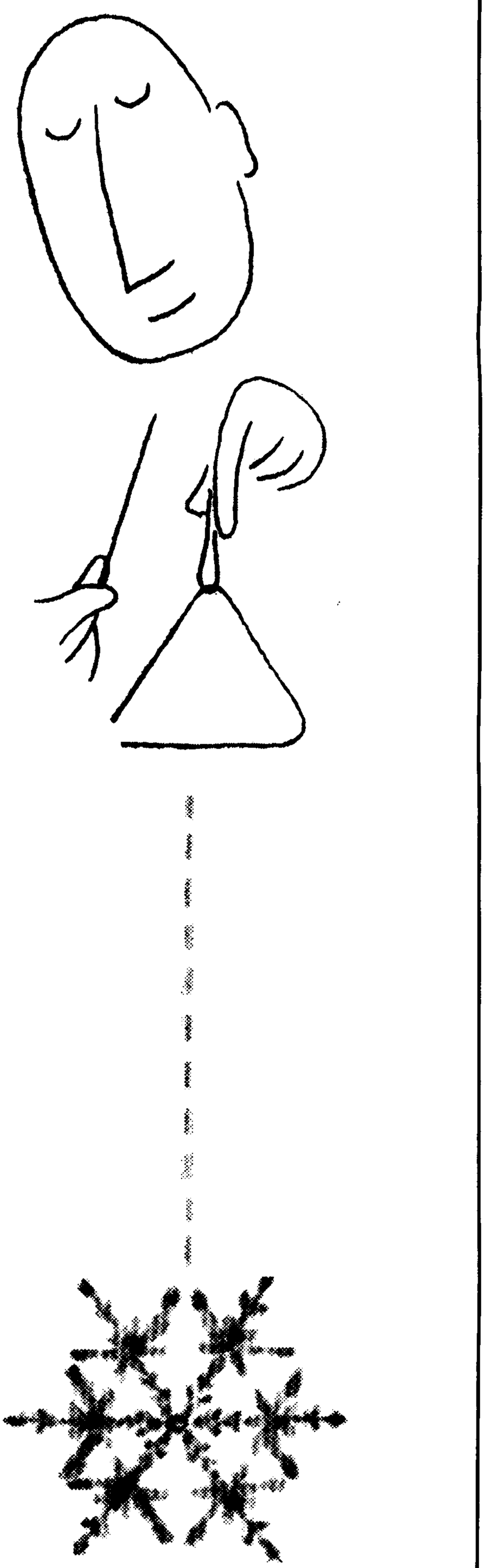

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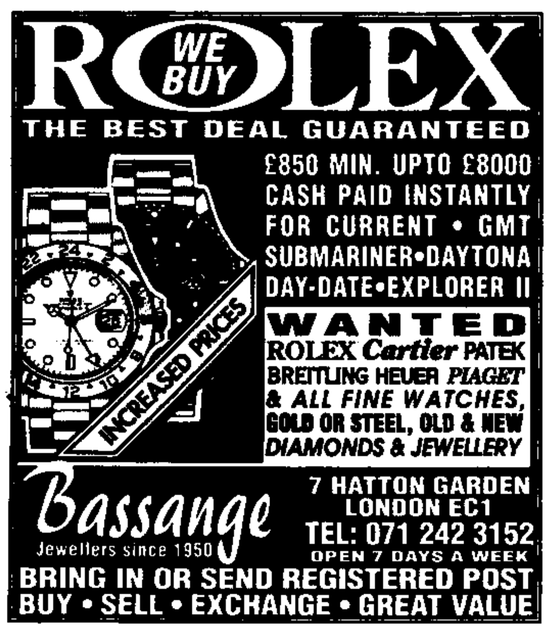

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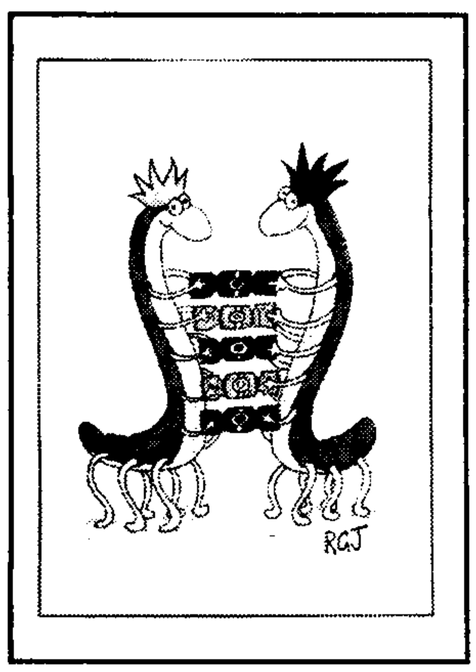

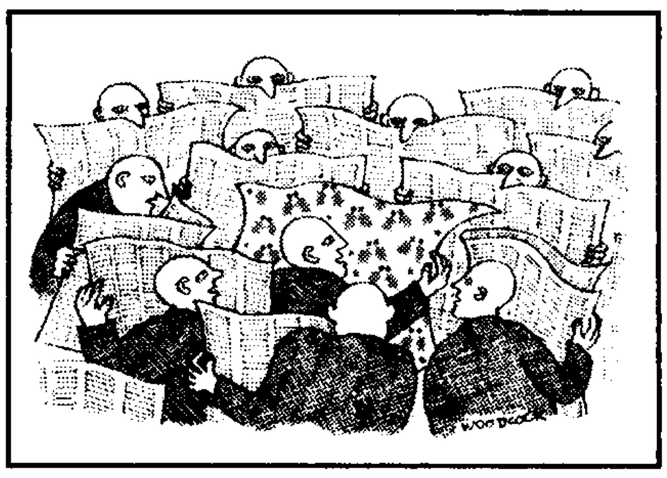

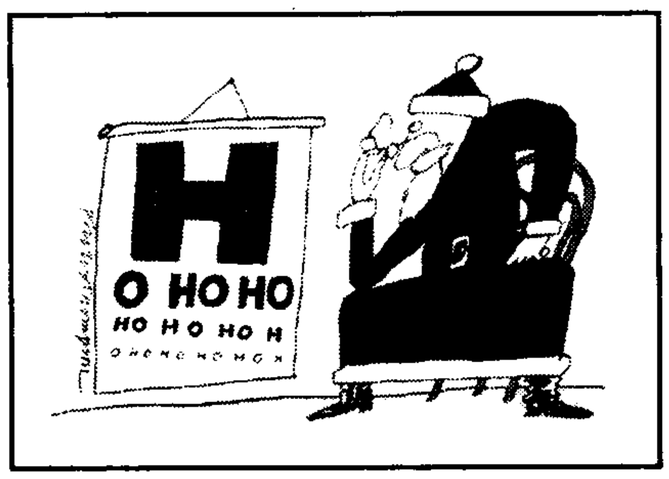

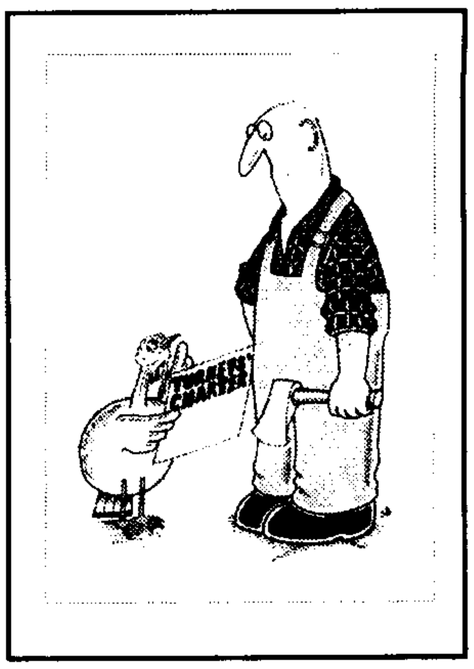

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